

# COUNTRY LIFE

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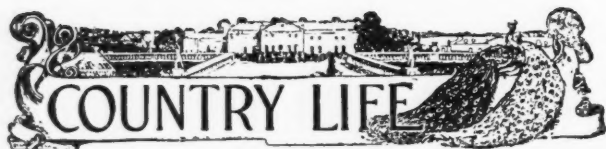
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SPEAIGHT.

157, New Bond Street, W.

THE COUNTESS BEAUCHAMP AND HER SONS.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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## MR. RIDER HAGGARD'S LAMENT.

TO his new edition of "Rural England," Mr. Rider Haggard has written a preface which constitutes an able and suggestive review of agricultural history during the last four years. Personally, he has had cause for disappointment. He published the book with the hope that it would lead to some definite change, and at the end he finds that "nothing of consequence has happened." And for this he casts a certain amount of blame upon the Unionist Party to which he belongs. In the course of the last period of the deceased Parliament, he finds that a Government largely composed of country gentlemen could only devote a few hours to questions dealing, directly or indirectly, with agriculture. Several Bills bearing a rural complexion were introduced, but not one was given a chance of passing. He speculates somewhat bitterly upon the causes of all this. One that he suggests is that "the idea is ingrained in so many members of our hereditary governing classes" that "the land of Britain is first and foremost a retreat for sportsmen, and a tabernacle for the givers of fashionable house-parties." Alternatively it may be because "£120,000,000 or so of the national cash" has been devoted to a scheme for the purchase of Irish estates, of which, he adds, £12,000,000 is in the form of a gift. Whatever may be the reason, it is impossible not to agree with the conclusion he arrives at, that nothing was done; nothing was even attempted, and "the great opportunity has gone by for ever." Yet he considers that things have not improved in Rural England since the date of the publication of his first edition. No advance is to be seen in the counties

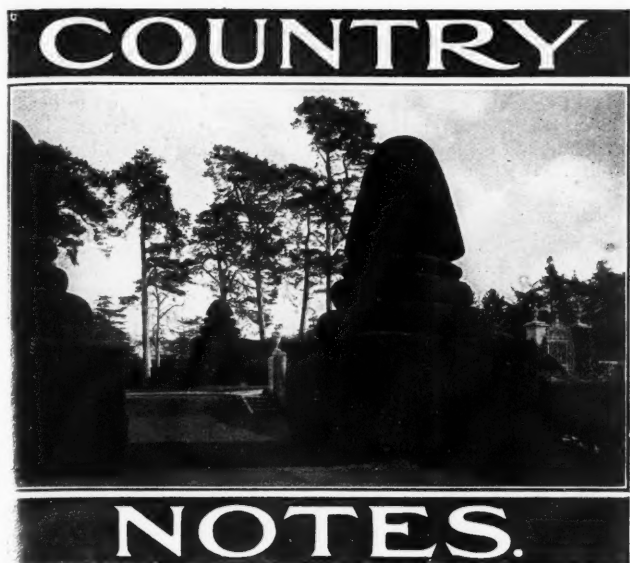
with which he is most familiar. We suppose he refers to Norfolk, Suffolk, and East Anglia generally. This brings us to a consideration of the remedies that riper judgment has taught him to recommend.

Personally Mr. Rider Haggard is a Protectionist, but he considers the question as one of academic interest only. Protection under the present condition of things is, as far as agriculture is concerned, out of the range of practical politics, and he declines to discuss it. "To talk about Protection," he says, "as a remedy for the evils by which we are surrounded is merely to dash our heads against a wall." Neither the proposals made by Mr. Chamberlain nor those by Mr. A. J. Balfour would, he considers, have benefited the greatest of our industries, and therefore he advises those who are interested in the progress of agriculture "to leave the whole matter severely alone, and content itself with pressing forward just and reasonable reforms." He goes further, and declares that, if Mr. Balfour's scheme, or anything similar to it, were brought forward, "I hold that agriculture should fight it by all means in its power." This, it will be admitted, is somewhat strong language for Mr. Rider Haggard to use, because he is, in the first place, a Unionist, and in the second, an avowed Protectionist in principle. The alternative favoured by him is well known. Mr. Rider Haggard has frequently expressed his hope and wish that the old class of yeoman farmers could be re-established on the land. But we think this is something of a dream. They might be called yeomen, but they would bear very little resemblance to the freeholders whom Addison has described so vividly in one of his papers. Nor is it, as far as can be seen, possible to reconstitute the conditions under which the old yeomen were able to make a livelihood. They had right of common pasturage, and now that the cultivable land is nearly all enclosed, this can never be given back to them. Besides, romance has flung a deceptive halo over the yeoman. He was certainly not a good tiller of the soil, but lazy, old-fashioned, and unenterprising. No houses were so much in need of repair, no gardens so ill-kept, no fields so overgrown with weeds as those of the small proprietor of the eighteenth century. The kind of small holder who is possible to-day is bound to differ essentially from those who held the place aforetime. He must make of the earth a kind of factory; not an inch of soil but must contribute to the produce; not an opportunity can be neglected. For the great difference, after all, between farming in the old days and farming now is that the margin of profit has decreased. Rough plenty has given way to a bare competency. One may find an eloquent sign of this change in the character of the weights and measures now in use. The yeoman sold his milk in barn gallons; that is to say, he filled the can full where his modern successor sells it in exact imperial measure. One calculated in bundles and forkfuls, while the other weighs and measures minutely.

The reason was that a little more or less mattered nothing to the farmer whose profits were bountiful, whereas a fraction makes such a difference in modern accounts that it may be enough to cast the balance on the wrong side. Thus the establishment of small holdings is not likely to lead to the revival of the yeoman farmer. The danger rather is that it may introduce into England a class not unlike the small proprietors of France. The latter have, of course, both good and ill qualities. They are to a moderate extent patriotic, their honesty is not questioned, nor is their industry, frugality, and prudence. But these are only the virtues of the political economist. The small proprietor, it has been found by experience, tends to a sordid materialism in his life, and to miserliness in his habits. Caution is too strongly developed in him. Whether the same characteristics would come out in England or not remains a question. At the present moment Mr. Rider Haggard is less concerned with speculation on that part of the subject than with discussing the injustices which he thinks inherent in the system of giving local authorities the right to acquire land for the purpose of letting it out in small holdings and allotments. He is afraid that the parish council, if it had the chance, would "pick the eyes" of an estate, selecting its choicest pieces of ground, and not in any way regarding the well-being of the original owner. It can scarcely be said that apprehensions of this kind are completely groundless; but too much may be made of them. The landowner who is wise in his generation will anticipate the application of compulsory measures, and by providing small holdings of his own free will render the parish council innocuous. Not that we have seen much trace of mischief-making in these bodies. They have, on the whole, done less harm than was expected of them.

## Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of the Countess Beauchamp with her two little sons. Lady Beauchamp is a sister of the Duke of Westminster, and her marriage to Earl Beauchamp took place in 1902.



At the Academy banquet the most brilliant speech was, undoubtedly, that delivered by Mr. Rudyard Kipling, who replied to the toast of literature. It came as a happy surprise after the prosing of the various orators who went before him. That excellently good man Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had just been speaking sympathetically of the desire of the Government to encourage art, of the benefit to be obtained by encouraging artistic tastes among the multitude, of the need there was to enlarge the House of Commons, and of various kindred subjects all treated in the same admirable manner. But when Mr. Rudyard Kipling rose, these prosaic problems of the practical politician were laid aside for a consideration of the needs of the spirit. It is very strange, when you come to think of it, that it is not the great man nor the great deed which becomes immortal, but the magical words in which the deed is recorded. Politicians, statesmen, engineers, soldiers fume and fret their little life away, accomplishing this, or failing in that, but at the end their fame depends on some Bohemian or masterless man, as Mr. Kipling calls him, as often as not out at elbows, addicted to habits, which, to say the least of it, do not command the admiration of his fellows, yet who, because he is possessed of the necromancy of words, is the one to confer immortality on the man of action.

As Mr. Kipling eloquently pointed out, this masterless man need not be, and very seldom is, reckoned one of the great ones of the earth. A tinker in Bedford Gaol and a pamphleteer shopkeeper in London, a muzzy Scotsman, a German Jew, a condemned French thief, an English Admiral—each has shown that he possesses this power beyond all other powers, and has sent something down to eternity which will stir the minds and souls of generations yet unborn, even as it has stirred those who went before. And this bard, or recorder of the doings of men, to follow the speaker further, has no room for pity, mercy, or respect, for fear, or even for legality. The material before him is the life and action of his fellow-men, and—to quit the passionate oratory of Mr. Kipling for more homely diction—he must look on everything, sacred and profane, purely as material for copy. It is easy to curl the lip in condemning him, but, when rightly understood, this is the triumph of spirit over body—the only pleasure and proved triumph that we have experienced.

The foreign trade returns for April show a clean sheet. That is to say, in every department there is an increase, and a decrease in none—a very remarkable state of things indeed when it is remembered that 1905 formed a record in the history of British commerce. The imports of food, drink, and tobacco increased by a million, and the exports by half a million. The imports of raw materials and articles mainly manufactured increased by twelve millions, and the exports by two millions. The imports of articles wholly or mainly manufactured increased by five and a-half millions, and the exports by thirteen millions. There was, therefore, a total and satisfactory increase both in imports and exports. These figures supply evidence that is not to be controverted of the prosperity of the country at the present time, and, as they are accompanied by a decrease, both absolute and proportionate, in the number of the unemployed, it would not appear as though there were any reasons to question the inference that has generally been drawn from them.

Sir William Van Horne, the chairman of the Canadian Pacific Railway, offers what appears to be a sensible word of advice to British manufacturers. His contention is that they

have not taken anything like full advantage of the preference which is offered them by the Dominion, and he attributes this to the fact that they are usually represented there by boys or very young men who naturally lack the experience which would enable them to form a true judgment of the wants of the Canadian people. The consequence is that Canadian commerce with the United States goes on increasing, while that with Great Britain is nothing like that which it should be. The remedy would appear to be in the hands of the manufacturers. Instead of sending youths out to represent them, they ought to select men of knowledge and experience, who would be able to form a much riper judgment as to the class of goods with which business can be done. From every point of view, commercial, political, and social, it is of the utmost importance that the commercial bonds between Great Britain and the Dominion should be as close as possible.

It is evident that the question of Sunday trading is one that the present Parliament have determined to deal with, and we cannot help thinking that the proposition is a good one. The establishment of a seventh day of rest has been advocated too much on the grounds of an authoritative religious deliverance. It has been said with the greatest truth that, if the Sabbath, or Sunday, had not been proclaimed as part of the Divine law, it would have had to be invented. Six days of labour at a time are as much as the average man is able to perform, and, as a mere matter of health, the stoppage of work on Sunday has everything to recommend it. If those who are endeavouring to strengthen the law on the point would be content to base their argument simply on the hygienic necessity for such a rest, we feel quite sure that they would gain the support of the general public. It can only be regarded as unfortunate that a matter of this kind should have got mixed up with those religious scruples which intrude themselves into so many departments of thought.

#### FELIX OPPORTUNITATE MORTIS.

We found him dead at the foot of the hawthorn hedge,  
With folded wings, and stiffening, sightless eyes,  
His last flight finished, the last of his songs half sung.

In March he came and sang to the naked trees,  
Sang green leaves to life and the blossoming May,  
Carolling there in the hedge like a spirit of spring.

And now he is dead to wake no more with the day,  
To salute no more the dawn with a confident pipe,  
And trill to the fading lights of the eve no more.

O blithe sweet spirit of song to the silence flown,  
Farewell! I bring you no tribute of falling tears;  
I rejoice with you who are safe from the winter frost.

Blest above us who are men! Your life to the end  
Was a lilt of song and a rustle of musical wings;  
You lived in the sunlight singing and died in spring.

ROBIN FLOWER.

In one of the monthly journals it is suggested that able-bodied paupers, and the term would include those sturdy beggars that rank as unemployed, might very well be despatched to the seaside where erosion is taking place, and be set to work on reclamation. There is no doubt plenty to do here, as the low groyning system, acting very slowly, it is true, is yielding a fair amount of what may become land. But anyone can see that to transform it into valuable soil would demand a vast expenditure of manual labour. Undoubtedly, the task would be profitable in the end; but for many a long year there would have to be a continuous and enormous outlay of capital without any corresponding return. While the work was going on the able-bodied paupers would have to be lodged and fed. The former of these conditions might easily be fulfilled by the erection of cheap buildings of a bungalow description on the foreshore, but the eating would be a charge on capital. Thus there are serious difficulties in the way of carrying out the suggestion, and yet they do not seem to be insurmountable.

The action at law taken against Mr. E. D. Till of Eynsford, by the local brewery company, is of vast importance. Mr. Till, whose devotion to his native village and his efforts to benefit it are well known, several years ago took a lease of one of the inns with the object of carrying it on as, in his view, a place of public refreshment should be carried on. Under a covenant with the local brewery company he partly rebuilt the house and transformed it from an ordinary wayside public into a clean and comfortable village inn; but, at the same time, he made certain arbitrary rules to which the brewery took strong exception. One of these was that no customer was to have more than one drink. Of course, opinion may vary as to the wisdom of this regulation, which is a very common one in working-class clubs. It was not the province of the judge to decide upon that point. What was really before him was Mr. Till's action, as far as it regarded the brewery company.

It will be understood that Mr. Till was tenant of a tied-house, and that the natural desire of the brewers was that as much of their drink as was reasonably possible should be consumed on the premises, brewery companies not being addicted to taking up social reform. Mr. Till's restriction, however, must have greatly interfered with the sale of alcoholic liquors, as the regular toppers were not likely to patronise a house where one drink only was obtainable, and even the casual visitor might very possibly consider that he himself was the one and only judge of how much was good for him. Still, the judge held that the notice which had been put up was not incompatible with the terms of the lease. As long as Mr. Till obeyed the law in every respect, and did not in any way endanger the licence, he was entitled to carry on his business in the manner that most commended itself to his judgment. He is to be congratulated on the result of the action. If the decision had been adverse, it would have only shown that any individual's disinterested attempt at reform was liable to be discouraged and declared illegal.

It is the duty of those responsible for preserving the natural beauty of open spaces to respect the sacred trust committed to their care, but in the case of Burnham Beeches this trust is apparently flagrantly abused. The Beeches are the remnant of a natural forest, but the managers are endeavouring to cultivate these glorious wide expanses in a commercial spirit. The latest development is to drain the natural bogs, filled with the rarest and most beautiful of moisture-loving flowers, into a stream running from the boggy uplands. The spongy marshes are of small extent, and offer no interference to the safe enjoyment of this beautiful natural forest. Many lovely wild flowers, which we should have thought the responsible managers of the Beeches would have made every effort to preserve, have disappeared, not through the heedless child, or the would-be botanist, but through this senseless craze for drainage. Where are the masses of bog asphodel, the golden cups of the marsh-marigold, and even the pretty pink of cuckoo-pint? The thinning of the forest growth, we believe, was stopped, as undertaken in too commercial a way. Now begins the scheme for wholesale drainage. We should like to know the reason for these irritating and unnecessary disturbances of wild flower-life.

Not before time a protest has been made against the character of the songs that are most popular in England at the present moment, and we are glad to see that it comes from a source so authoritative as the mouth of Mr. Plunket Greene. He says that the general taste in songs is simply deplorable, and it does not require much acquaintance with the fashionable ditties of the drawing-room to know that he is right. The folk-song has died out of the country, and its place is being taken by the popular song from the music-hall. Anyone who considers the question will see how this occurs. Under the old condition of affairs songs were handed down *viva voce*. The young picked them up from the singing of the old, and so they grew out of the natural wants of humanity. No doubt our great-grandmothers and great-grandfathers were just as capable of being silly as we their descendants are, and it may be easily imagined that many of the songs that grew to be beautiful and classical were vulgar enough when they first came into existence. But repetition by a great variety of singers is like a course of careful correction, which in the long run weeds out imperfections.

Professor Greene showed clearly enough how the modern song comes into existence. No doubt it is first of all written, and as often as not published as a poem in some newspaper, if not sold direct to the music publishers. The latter actually pays to have it produced, and to a large extent they dictate what shall be the popular songs, so that there is no natural growth whatever. Now if any were disposed to controvert this statement, it would be quite sufficient to ask them to take a series of songs, say those which have been popular since the time of "Champagne Charlie" to "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay," or "A Bicycle Made for Two." It is impossible to imagine anyone of the slightest intelligence hesitating to describe these songs as the most abject rubbish. But if we go backward it is easy to find instances of the most beautiful songs that were popular in their day. "Sally in Our Alley," "Who will O'er the Downs so Free?" and "The Little Brown Jug" belong to quite a different class from that with which we are most familiar, and perhaps there may be prejudice in the preference. But we like such an old comic song as "Villikins and His Dinah" compared with the rubbish emanating from the music-hall of to-day.

The new laws of croquet have been devised on the right lines, if they are judged on their tendency to shorten the ordinary match, to get rid of the monotonous opening strokes at the first hoop, and generally to liven up the game. The difficulty of re-entry has long been recognised as a stumbling-block to the general popularity of the game, and this the new proposal anent the wired ball strives to remove. On the other hand, the more

artificial a game becomes, the less satisfaction there is in playing it; and, as at golf, the multiplication of local bye-laws has by no means proved an unmixed blessing, and old golfers sigh at times for the simplicity of the old days when lifting a ball meant losing a hole; so, too, it is very doubtful whether this attempt to evade playing the croquet ball where it lies will prove a sound idea. The fact is, the game is an easy one to the player of average ability. It is the opposite of golf, which is always liable to beat the player on any particular day, and it is this inherent easiness which is, when players become expert, the cause of the complaints against it. Cricket on billiard-table wickets in continued fine weather is closely analogous.

It has been shown that Ireland could make a good profit out of her woods and forests, if the people only went the right way about trying to make forestry a profitable industry. The Department of Agriculture for Ireland, in its Journal, gives a lot of useful hints on the growing and cutting of timber. It points out that the amount of profit to be made depends on cutting down the timber at the proper time. The best time to fell timber is when it just reaches maturity, and the most prominent indications of this are to be taken from the small size of the needles or leaves, the stunted appearance and diminished length of the annual shoots, and possibly the growth of moss and lichen upon them, and the presence of dead branches or twigs in the upper part of the crown. Trees exhibiting such features should be cut down as soon as possible. The most profitable time at which to cut the various trees on average ground is given as follows: Pines and spruces, 70 to 100 years; larch, 50 to 80; ash, 60 to 80; beech, elm, and sycamore, 80 to 100; willows and poplars, 40 to 50 years. Oak, if grown upon good land, will rarely mature until it has been growing for 120 years.

### THE IDOL.

(A FRAGMENT.)

All the quick pageant of the earth for thee  
Is foil, and for thy myriad moods of grace  
Like swallow flight that swiftly glance and go.  
For thy most stately form the brooding hills  
Wend upward, gathering their purple robes  
From the white houses and the forest-ring:  
And for thy solemn eyes the waters sleep  
In land-locked pools, and when they light and smile,  
For thee the sun hath glittered from the heavens  
And broken into laughter on the wave.  
And for thy winsome youth ten thousand Springs  
Have budded, and for thy smile the earth grown gay:  
And for that sweeter sadness of thy tears  
Gray mists have gathered on the autumn fields  
And the trees scattered down their coronals.  
Thou art the expressed image of all love,  
All beauty, all desire, in thee find form  
All that earth nourishes of good or fair,  
And in the concert of thy graces rings  
The passionate anthem of the universe.

E. G. KNOX.

The last of the many things of which we hear that it is better made in Germany than we can make it here, is the brown trout. Of course we have long known that the trout in German rivers are larger and more numerous than those in our own streams—it is a point that is well brought out in Mr. Barrington's pleasant book, lately published, "Seventy Years of Angling." It is well known also that the Germans, living in a land where sea fish are not to be obtained universally, take a good deal more pains in making their ponds and lakes lucrative than we take; but it is only lately, as far as we are aware, that German trout have been imported at all extensively into this country. All who are in the habit of fishing the Tay will know those ponds by the side of the river, which have been formed during recent years by the Messrs. Coats. We understand that they have been stocked with German trout, and that the fish are doing very well in them. The points claimed for the German trout, which is, of course, our brown trout, are that it grows quicker and larger than our native fish of the same species, that it continues to rise to fly after attaining a size at which Loch Levens usually develop cannibalistic tastes or become bottom feeders, and that it has not the tendency to wander of the "rainbow." All this is claimed for the German. But we should like to know him a little better and a little longer before conceding it all. The fact that he grows larger in German rivers than in our smaller streams does not prove that he will retain his Teutonic measurements after importation into rivers where he has less room, and, probably, less food.

The more recent snow in Norway will, no doubt, have its effect in helping to fill the rivers and give the salmon good water for running up, but the spring snow is never of equal use with the winter snow in this respect. In winter the snow gets packed and frozen hard, so that it melts gradually and helps to give

something more like a constant replenishment to the rivers later. The spring snow never packs in the same way, and consequently melts all at once, with the result of making a quick flood which soon runs down. Last year in most of the Norwegian rivers the water, though there was plenty of it, was falling almost all the time of the angling season, and to this many attribute the comparative failure of last year's angling, for the reluctance of salmon to take a lure in falling water is very well known both on this and on the other side of the North Sea.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh called the attention of Parliament one day last week to an interesting and picturesque incident in Scottish country life, namely, the remarkable incursion into that country of gipsies, said to be mainly from Germany. He did not, however, regard them, in the first instance, at all events, from the point of view of the picturesque adjunct; it was, on the contrary, to complain of their characteristic pilfering propensities that he referred to them, and to ask whether anything could be done to check such undesirable immigration, or to send

back the gipsies to the place where they appear to have come from—Germany. Lord Tweedmouth's reply conveyed little that was of encouragement. He said that these gipsies were not, as a matter of fact, made in Germany, but that their chief lived in Italy, that they were birds of passage, and were on their way thither. Gipsies, as a rule, are birds of passage, but these particular birds seem scarcely to go as the crow flies if they take Scotland on their way home to Italy from Germany; nor will it greatly comfort the Scottish henwife, who is bemoaning chickens stolen, to read Lord Tweedmouth's statement that he believes these gipsies to be "peaceful and quiet, though, perhaps, after the fashion of gipsies, guilty of petty larcenies." It is not a fashion which makes them pleasant neighbours. They evade the operation of the Aliens Act in that they come over in small bands, and with a certain amount of portable property and livestock, and it appears from Lord Tweedmouth's statement to be doubtful whether their "fashion of petty larceny," of which he speaks so charitably, really qualifies them for deportation as "undesirable aliens."

## SPRING BEAUTY OF FRUIT TREES.

ONE of the charms of the old gardens of England consists, not in the parterre of brilliant flowers, but in the gnarled fruit trees trained against some warm red-brick wall with, perhaps, masses of hardy flowers or fragrant bushes of the Provence and monthly rose at its foot. Such garden memories are recalled by the illustrations of the noble blossom-covered walls in the restful Palace garden at Wells, where fruit-growing has its proper place in the horticultural routine. Unfortunately, the earlier-flowering trees, the cherry, and the first of the apples, have undergone an unpleasant experience during the recent

north winds and sharp frosts, but while the trees exposed in orchard and meadow have suffered beyond recovery, the sheltered garden; such as is here depicted has, where proper protection has been given, entirely escaped. There is something to look forward to in the fruit garden beyond the burst of beautiful flowers in spring, and in this uncertain climate it is the wall fruit tree that makes amends for destruction in the orchard, where it is impossible on a large scale to afford adequate covering to screen the flowers from the frosts and winds of an English spring.

The cultivation of fruit trees has made great strides in recent



T. W. Phillips.

IN THE PALACE GARDENS AT WELLS.

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T. W. Phillips.

## THE MOAT GARDEN.

Copyright.

years, but there is much to accomplish if the English grower is to enter into serious competition with the excellent importations from abroad; and the reason is obvious. Travelling through England one is impressed with the wasted opportunities of growing fruit. An orchard may be picturesque in its decay, but it does not represent a profitable return, while even the old trees, bearing perhaps crops of fine fruit year by year, are neither manured nor pruned from generation to generation. The illustrations have a two-fold object—one to show the beauty of the trees when under their drift of blossom, and the other that it is only when intelligent cultivation is bestowed that an abundant harvest is realised in autumn. Much of the finest fruit that is sent to the various markets scattered through England comes from the trees grown against walls, and this is true, perhaps, more of the peach and nectarine than of the apple and pear. We wish a satisfactory reason could be given for the decline of peach-growing against walls in England. A generation ago every old garden had its peach and nectarine wall, or some sunny corner where this delicious fruit was brought to perfection; but this is not so in the present day. Has the English gardener's hand lost its cunning, or has the climate altered to so great an extent

that it no longer befriends this toothsome fruit? This is regrettable, for no peach is like the English fruit when it is

eaten at the right moment, the flavourless varieties of America having little of its golden qualities. And we are afraid that what is true of the peach is true also of the nectarine and the apricot, though the decline in the popularity of the apricot may be attributed to its objectionable habit, of the Moorpark variety in particular, of dying suddenly without any apparent cause for such behaviour.

One of the most beautiful pictures of pear blossom may be seen in Mr. Jeremiah Colman's garden at Gatton Park. It is of the Uvedale's St. Germain variety. This tree is probably over 200 years old, and seldom fails to bear a large burden of fruits, which individually weigh 2lb. a-piece. The present dimensions are 9ft. 10in. in length, the longest branch 48ft., and the bole 12in. from the ground level 8ft. 8in. in circumference. This is considered to be the largest espalier trained fruit tree in the kingdom.

A notable sign of increasing interest in fruit cultivation is the planting of small orchards, not only of one kind of fruit, but of apples, cherries, pears, and plums. The writer planted an orchard in front of a cottage three years ago, and at the present moment the branches are vested in blossom, with rivulets of



T. W. Phillips.

## PEAR BLOSSOM.

Copyright.

daffodils in the grass beneath. This is linking usefulness and picturesque beauty, and the edible varieties of the apple and pear are as beautiful in flower as the kinds grown with only that object in view. We may know the variety by the size and colour of the flower, and when planting an orchard for its spring beauty and fruit this divergence should be considered. This little orchard garden was suggested by a chapter in a well-known gardening book, and its success is complete. It was there

mentioned that one's enjoyment of the garden would be greatly increased if the orchard, which is so often thrust away into a remote corner, were brought into direct communication with it. There is no need to make a definite break between the two; it is all the better not to know where the garden ends and the orchard begins. Towards the edge of the mown lawn there may already be trees of the Red Siberian crab, and the handsome crab John Downie, and the pretty little fairy apple, while the nearer orchard trees may well be wreathed with some of the free cluster roses, such as Bennett's Seedling or Dundee Rambler.

And if the orchard, as the writer points out, is of some extent, its standard trees of pear, apple, cherry, and plum may be varied by three or four bush trees, or by some of the beautiful fruit trees of lower growth, such as medlars and quinces. There may also be branches of cut-leaved blackberry and a thicket of crabs or filberts, and on one side, or perhaps more, a shady nut alley. There is no need to be always mowing the garden orchard. One wide grassy way might well be kept closely

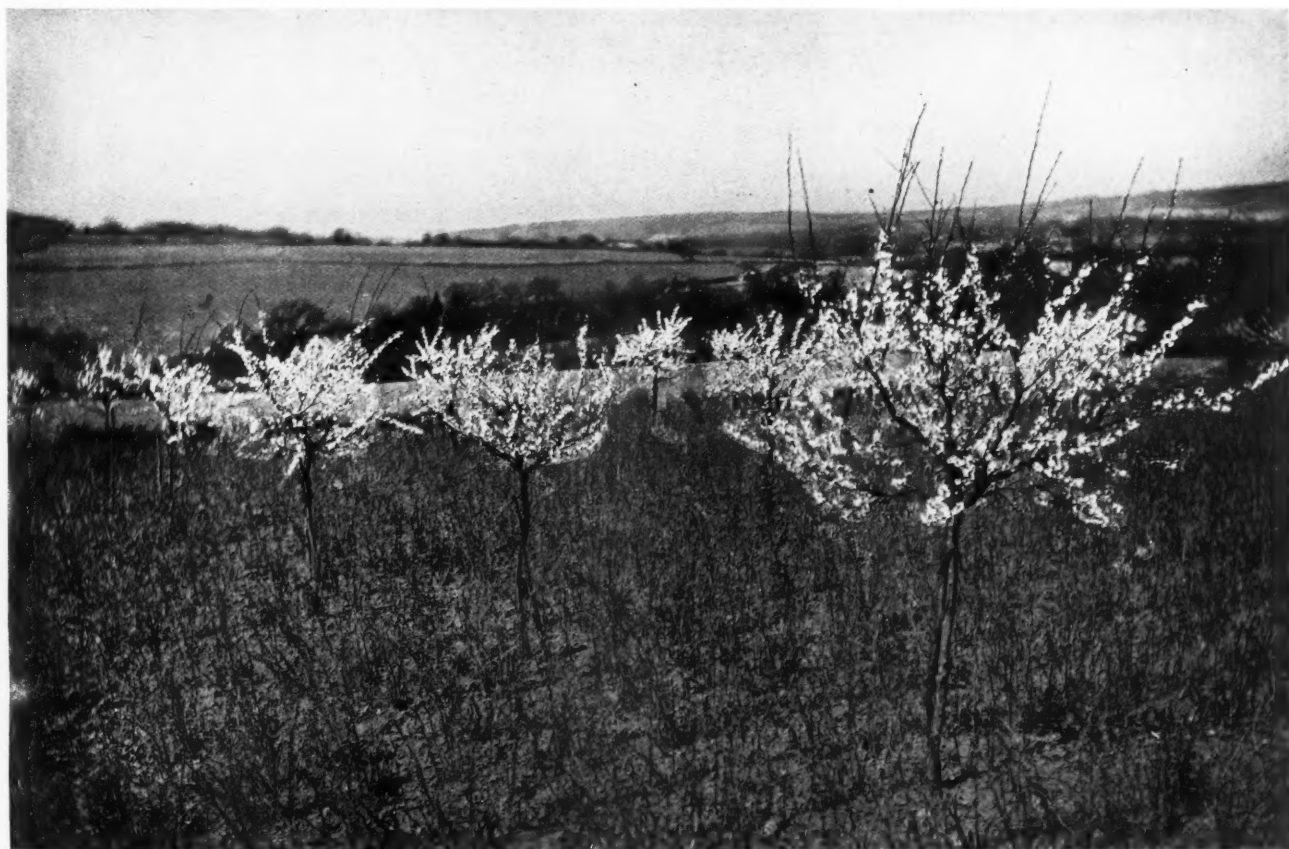


A FAMOUS RIBSTON PIPPIN AT PAIN'S HILL.

shorn, but much of the middle and side spaces had better not be cut until haytime, for many would be the bulbs planted under the turf, great drifts of daffodils and Spanish scillas and fritillaries for the larger effects, and colchicums and saffron fucus for the later months. If the grass were mown again in September, just before the colchicums appear, it would allow of easy access to the fruit trees in the time of their harvest, and in those interesting weeks immediately before the apples ripen.

And where is the old English quince in the modern garden? Its spring beauty is fresh and winsome, and this is followed in due season by the golden fruits, which pour their heavy scent into the autumn air, while it has a picturesqueness when bare of leafage that is denied even the weather-beaten Ribston Pippin of many an old English garden. Where there is a space of boggy ground, there plant a colony of the English quince for its flowers and its fruits.

The cottager misses many opportunities in not taking advantage of bare walls, sometimes in exactly the right position, for the growth of the pear, peach, plum, and apricot. Well we remember the Jargonelle pear tree on the gable end of the old home, its gnarled and twisted stems circling round the walls, and peeping in the latticed windows—a feast of flowers in spring, and of pale green melting fruits in September. It is in this joyous month that the man who intends to plant should note the varieties that are the most beautiful in flower and the most luscious in quality.



## THE DARTMOOR PONY.



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OUT ON THE MOOR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

A SHORT time ago we gave some illustrations of the excellent sheep and pigs kept by Mr. Kingwell at Great Aish, near Dartmoor, and to-day we are showing some photographs of his celebrated Dartmoor ponies. He is considered the largest breeder of ponies in Great Britain, his stud numbering over 120. Of the animal itself there is not much that is new to be said. It is a very near relative of the Exmoor pony, though it usually runs a little larger, standing about 13h. high. Lord Arthur Cecil's description of the breed is that "they are hardy, sure-footed, clever, and useful ponies, which can stand any amount of work, and are generally of the general-purpose type. The most esteemed colours are brown, bay, and black." No doubt their hardiness is due, as is the case with many other ponies, to the manner in which they are bred, for there must be a considerable similarity in constitution between hill

ponies of very different localities. The truth is that the Dartmoor pony lives, to all practical purposes, as a wild animal, except once in the year when the ponies are rounded up and separated according to their ownership, which is determined by a mark made when the pony is turned out. They run at their own free will on the moor during all the rest of the twelve months. It has been suggested that if brought under control—as, for instance, those of Sir Thomas Acland are on Exmoor—certain modifications might be advantageously made in the type. Mr. Kingwell's experience, however, is that none of these attempts has so far been successful. At one time, thinking that it would be worth his while to produce an entirely different type of pony, he introduced a Devonshire pack-horse among his mares, but the results were disappointing. The offspring did not seem to possess the hardiness and constitution characteristics



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HEEDLESS OF WEATHER AND WIND.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of their Exmoor ancestors, and in the process of time the whole of them died out. The present practice is to allow the mares and the majority of the stallions to run wild; and it is to be noted, as affording evidence of the wildness of the creatures, that the foals are dropped about the same period of the year—that is to say, in April and May. It has happened that a mare has foaled in January; but this is one of the rare and unusual occurrences which only serve to emphasise the general rule. One stallion, indeed, is for the greater part of the year kept in the rich meadows below, and we show a photograph of him. It will be noticed that even he possesses something of the shagginess characteristic of the Exmoor pony. This quality the breeder tries to nourish, for upon it the reputation of the race depends. The open-air life which the ponies are compelled to lead, and the roughness of their pasturage, are accountable, in the first place, for their hardiness of constitution, and, in the second place, for their small size. The latter quality is one which it is desirable to retain, and suggestions have frequently been made for decreasing the stature of the Exmoor. To do this it would be necessary, in the first place, to bring them under control, as the result aimed at can only be achieved by selecting the smallest-sized animals, and breeding from them for the course of several generations. No doubt this would meet a well-understood demand, as it becomes increasingly difficult to obtain a pony that is at one and the same time small of size and strong and hardy. The breeder who attempted it would have to take the utmost care that the ponies did not grow soft under kinder treatment than that to which they had been accustomed. As we have hinted already, Mr. Kingwell's experience does not point to the practicability of such a modification. He feels quite sure that as the pony has been developed out of the soil, so he will continue to be a product of it, and that any outside interference is more likely to do harm than good. On Exmoor, it is true, various experiments have been tried, particularly that of turning Arab horses out among the mares. This, probably, gave the foals a run of speed; but, on the other hand, it tended to ruin those good shoulders for which the breed used to be most famous, and there is very little disposition at Dartmoor to follow the example of Exmoor. Mr. Kingwell gave many examples to show how very hardy these ponies are under present conditions. A good one of not more than 13h. will carry a man or a boy of 10st., and on more than one occasion has brought him in at the kill after a long run. But, of course, the majority of the ponies are destined for a less happy fate than that of belonging to a boy and taking him hunting. The demand for them in a large measure comes from the coal-mines, where the conditions demand a pony of very great strength of constitution, and also of the highest hauling power, joined, if possible, to a capacity to live on a small amount of food. The Dartmoor pony supplies these qualifications as well as any other breed, and better than most, though anyone who has seen them in their native haunts, running like the wild horses they are, with their shaggy manes and tails flying in the wind, cannot but regret that any of them should be doomed to leave the



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BOGS HAVE NO TERRORS FOR HIM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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A JANUARY FOAL.

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A HORSE IN MINIATURE.

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surroundings of their youthful days and spend the rest of their lives in subterranean passages. It is one of the prettiest sights on the moor to see them captured and driven down to Brent Fair, where they are annually sold. They have all the courage and go of the horse of the American plains, and their rush down the street has to be seen to be understood. Mr. Kingwell, after the annual separation of the horses belonging to individual owners has taken place, is in the habit of driving his own into a corral, and taking out and putting a price on those which he means to dispose of at the approaching market. The others are then allowed to regain their freedom, and may be seen scampering through the heath and kicking their heels, while those selected for sale duly appear in the street set apart for that purpose, and for good

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A DARTMOOR PONY'S HEAD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

bourhood. It would be a thousand pities if any obstacle were put in the way of rearing these ponies in the traditional manner.

## BENCH-ENDS FROM TWO NORFOLK CHURCHES.

**D**URING the spoliation of the churches under Henry VIII. and Edward VI., and in the autumn of 1547, when roods and images were taken down and hacked to pieces or burnt by fanatics, when even the Bishops issued orders to deface the images, and later, during the Great Rebellion, when a still fiercer spirit of destruction was abroad in the land, so much of art, of history, and of interest perished, that it must be with a keen sense of gratitude and deliverance we realise the number of beautiful specimens of carved bench-ends that are left to us. The fact that in so many churches much below the level of a man's head was spared, while all above suffered, points to the largeness of the bands of the despoilers. Their very numbers hid from the eye and shielded from the axe a portion of their prey. In this portion were the painted figures on the bases of screens, the carving under the movable choir seats and on the bench-ends. A further reason, doubtless, why the carvings on the bench-ends and movable seats survived, unmutated, the general demolition is that they may not have been considered to have been set up for adoration. They often depicted figures and scenes of a family or domestic character, and monsters, dragons, grotesque animals, and sometimes various sins were portrayed. Some of these monsters, it is thought, symbolised heretics and those who had been excommunicated, while the motive of many of the carved figures is believed to have been educational or object-lessons for the unlettered of those unlettered days. Unfortunately some of the bench-ends that

escaped the fanatical destruction of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were ruthlessly broken and cut about with names, or destroyed during the careless times of the eighteenth century.

Benches were used exclusively in churches for many years prior to the introduction of pews. Indeed, the latter were not generally known until after the Reformation, and then, for a long period, their use was entirely confined to the family of the patron, or to distinguished persons. Happily, the reign of the enclosed pew was not a lengthy one, and there is now a reversion to the ancient custom of open benches. The earliest bench-ends were of the same height as the bench back; the elongation, or carrying up, belongs to the fourteenth century. This extension was not alone for ornament. The old method was not to construct decoration, but to decorate construction. Whatever was desirable, necessary, or useful was constructed; afterwards, it was made beautiful.

The two churches from which our examples are taken are in that part of Norfolk which, in the Conqueror's time, was called the Great Marshland. One is Wiggshall, or Wiggshall St. German's; the other Wiggshall St. Mary the Virgin. The Great Ouse flows between them. A bridge connects the two parishes, and has done so since the time of the Grand Survey, or Domesday Book. It was in this low-lying country that the great sluice burst in 1862, the flood covering an immense tract of land. The chancel floor of the church of St. German's being some 8 ft. below high-water mark, it will be understood how serious was the damage done.



THE THIRD DEADLY SIN.

In the thirteenth century a descendant of a follower of the Conqueror became owner of the Manor of Wiggenhall St. Mary, and, later, it was held by the great family of Kervile, or Capraval, under the Lords Bardolfs. The Kerviles continued as owners from the time of Richard I. to the year 1624, when at the death of Henry Kervile "perished the name of the ancient line of Kerviles." Doubtless the Kerviles, who were generous and powerful, were the founders and chief benefactors of the church. The beautiful work which is spared to us is probably due to the generosity of that great family. The heart of one Sir Robert Kervile, who "died in foreign parts," was brought home and buried in the church, and the spot is marked by a brass heart-shaped memorial. The great families of St. German's were the Fittons, Finchams, and the Howards.

In the beautiful examples of bench ends and finials from these two Norfolk churches the flat end of the bench is made ornamental by a shaft, or pilaster, on either side, divided by a band or rib on the level of the seat, thus forming two distinct shafts, one above the other, each with a capital and base. These shafts are surmounted by carved figures of men or grotesque animals, which were sufficiently substantially worked to be used as a holdfast or grip; each of these useful supports was made interestingly decorative. The figures are generally represented seated, the models being chiefly laymen, but occasionally kings or saints. On one bench-end there is a group of four standing figures. Two of them are evidently intended to represent a priest and an attending acolyte, the latter holding a book. The whole group of figures appear to portray matrimony. The standing figure on the left side of this bench-end is so arranged that the arms, etc., are worked into the moulding, and they are therefore protected from injury. The male and female demi-figures in our



BULL AND HORSESHOE.

first illustration were thought by some antiquarians to represent matrimony, but it will be observed that they are standing in an open mouth representing Hell, which has ten short and two long curved teeth, and that flames are issuing from the mouth. There is also the evil eye, or the eye of the monster below the jaw. It is evidently intended to represent the third of the deadly sins. In the next picture may be seen the same mouth and flaming jaws of Hell. The sinner in this has a wine cup in the right hand, and a bottle in the other.

The fabulous animals on many of the bench-ends are very



A WINEBIBBER.

The carving is so designed as to be practically incapable of injury by use. The writer has not been able to find examples of these finials of an earlier date than the second pointed Christian architecture. The examples we illustrate probably belong to about the latter part of that period. To avoid a large, plain, flat surface to the bench-end, such as were constructed in the earlier centuries, a niche or recess was hollowed out, and therein, on a pedestal, was placed the single figure of a saint, a king, an abbeys, a scribe, or benefactor, as in the last two pictures. These figures are of the most varied character, and both male and female. In one the crowned female figure is intended for St. Agatha, who is represented with a knife over her breast. Above the niched figures in St. Mary's benches is some excellent Gothic tracing, intended still further to break up the plainness and heaviness of the oak. Where this tracery is omitted, as in one instance it is in St. German's, the general effect suffers in consequence.

There is a breadth and an assurance about the rough tool marks on these old bench-ends that one must bow to. The hand that held the chisel was certainly the hand of an artist. What grand characters these old church carpenters must have

excellently and boldly carved. One is collared and chained. It has the resemblance of a dog, but has horns and tusks. Unfortunately the lower part of the face has been broken off. That in our third illustration is a horned animal holding a horseshoe. It might possibly have been intended for the bull of St. Luke. It should be noticed how cleverly the tail, the horns, and the ears of the animal are arranged to escape damage; also how conveniently the shoulders are brought up to serve the purpose of a hand-rest. The next is a beast with the head of an animal, the body and feet of a bird, and the wings and tail of a dragon. It has, like the wyvern among heraldic fabulous beasts, only two feet. Generally, above and between the pilasters and carved animals or figures rises the finial of the bench-end, technically termed "poppy head," from the fact that it often resembles the head of a poppy or an open pomegranate. Sometimes these ornaments are in the form of a fleur-de-lys, at others they appear to represent an embodiment of pomegranate and fleur-de-lys. These are not only ornamental, but are capable of being grasped at two different levels by the weak and infirm. There are thus in all three levels of hand support for those entering the seat or standing at the bench-end.



AN HERALDIC MONSTER.

been—living with, in, and for their work; giving ungrudgingly always of their best; lovingly, confidently, and surely toiling to express their thoughts, their feelings, their very selves, on the great slabs of oak that were to stand up for ever in the houses of their God. With hand and head and heart in perfect sympathy, and a great faith behind, need we marvel why their work carries with it an interest, a persuasion, and a conviction that may be looked for in vain among modern carvings.

STEPHEN AVELING.

## AN OLD GARDEN IN NORMANDY.

ON the pediment over a gateway in the old wall which separates this garden from a narrow grass-grown street in the outskirts of Caen, a city which, according to Freeman, "is almost without a rival," there is carved the date 1637. Were we to pass through the entrance over which these figures can be seen, we should not find ourselves in the garden which I am about to describe; but that they were once connected is proved by the now crumbling and ivy-grown stairway which led from one to the other, the garden which nearly surrounds the house, where I often stay, lying at a higher level than its neighbour. Let us ring at the great gateway, and enter the courtyard under the overhanging boughs of a huge lilac, whose masses of delicately-tinted blossoms shade an old well, while with them is mingled the glory of "laburnum rich in streaming gold." It is difficult to connect the tree which bears this graceful and beautiful flower with the arts of war, and yet it is said that it derives its name from L'Arc Bois, its wood having been used for making bows. On the side of the courtyard, opposite the lilac, there is a trellis where roses grow profusely, and somewhat at their own sweet will; but to make up for this want of formality, there stands near their roots a row of flowers prim and evenly ranged as though they were soldiers on parade. At the time of my last visit this narrow border was bright with foxgloves. Probably most readers know that this word should be written *folks-glove*, which was the term used in a list drawn up as long ago as the reign of Edward III., at a time when every wood and dale in Merrie England was filled with fairies, who were wont when necessity arose to hide themselves in the *folks-gloves* drooping bells. In Ireland, where the "good people" still in remote places dance by the light of the moon, the flower is known as *Lusmore*, or *fairy-cap*, but in France it is called *Le Gant de Notre Dame*. If instead of entering the hospitably-open door of the house we turn to the left, we come to a little gateway leading into the garden, and on one side—that next the wall separating us from the street—we find a lime-tree hedge. It is well that there is a wall to keep intruders out, for the lime does not lend itself to hedge-making as does a tree of even more importance—the beech, which, cut away at the top, will send out branches from close to its roots. This the lime refuses to do, so the hedge resembles somewhat the pillared division between the nave and aisle of a cathedral, with columns and triforium all in tenderest grey and green. It is a tall hedge, 15ft. or 16ft. in height, and must give Pierre, the gardener, something to do to mount up to keep it even at the top. Fortunately, one tree has been allowed to grow to its full stature, which breaks the monotony, and allows the flowers to show themselves, and what is more graceful and delicate than the blossom of the lime, united for half its length to the bractea, and then dividing into drooping tassels of pale yellow, tipped with red. But let us leave the hedge, and, turning to the right, go straight to the garden along a path with a wall of the house on one side and a long bed of roses, not trimmed into standards, but growing as Nature intended, on the other. Facing us we shall see a very beautiful object—the pump. Now few pumps can be described as beautiful objects, but this one is an exception, for it stands close to a pillar of stone or brick, it is impossible to tell which, so luxuriantly is it covered with clematis; not the splendid species brought from far-off China and Japan, with its magnificent purple or white flowers, but the common wild clematis *vitalba*, with its myriad starry blossoms veiling both pillar and pump so profusely that we can only tell the existence of the latter from the stone trough at its base and the handle, which can be seen amid the cloud of bloom. And those who have only an acquaintance with the ordinary pump handle cannot form a conception what a thing of beauty it is, when it is all of beaten iron, wrought into lovely curves and patterns of wondrous grace, as is this one, in common with many others in Normandy. Beyond the pump and a stretch



IN ST. MARY THE VIRGIN'S, WIGGENHALL.

of sloping grass there stands, surely, one of the most ornamental of our trees, though, perhaps, it should not be spoken of as "ours," since the horse-chestnut is only an acclimatised guest from Central Asia, and was first imported into England, and probably also into France, in the beginning of the seventeenth century. How beautiful it is, both as to leaf and flower; how lavish of its beauty, too, there being nothing mean nor niggardly about the horse-chestnut, with its broad, fan-shaped leaves and great cones of creamy blossom dashed with pink. No wonder it has gained the name of the Giants' Nosegay.

Near it the wall dividing the flower from the fruit and vegetable garden is a mass of greenery and artistic colouring. For over its bricks of madder brown and darkened crimson a vine has been trained and roses bloom, and, perhaps fairest of all, the honeysuckle displays its woodland grace. Few climbing plants win their way to our hearts as does the honeysuckle, our childhood's friend, whose delicate blossoms are to be seen even in the dark days of November. In olden times a valuable cosmetic was prepared from them, and so, as old Culpeper says of this plant, "the mayds do love it." A wall lying at right angles hides the view of Caen, that "city of a hundred spires." There is foothold, indeed, to be found when one is venturesome enough to attempt to mount, and thus a view of part of the town may be obtained, it being possible even to catch a glimpse of the spire of St. Pierre, said by its admirers to be the most beautiful in the world.

And so on past the horse-chestnut and a weeping ash—whose branches are caught fast and bound into an almost impenetrable wall by the tendrils of ivy which grow beneath—till we come to a spot which, notwithstanding that he has a vegetable garden, Pierre uses for the cultivation of peas and beans. And why

not? Since they are graceful plants, and he does not range them in ordered rows and drills, but with careless and unstudied effect. Indeed, there is a mingling of the purely ornamental and the useful and ornamental combined in this "smiling sweet parterre," which I love so much; for in a corner of one of the flower-beds near the horse-chestnut there stands a pear tree, which, when covered with blossom, is lovely, and scarcely less so in the russet autumn or even when stripped of leaves, since its bole and branches are gnarled into quaint fantastic shapes. The garden is different from most of those to be seen in France, where orderliness sometimes becomes almost a crime, so far is it carried. There is no over-orderliness here, but something sweet and surprising at every turn. Along part of the edge of the miniature precipice dividing my friend's garden from the adjoining one there are nut trees, but I do not think they often bear, which is a pity, since, as Richard Jefferies so charmingly put it, there are "no such nuts as those captured with cunning search, from the bough in the tinted sunlight and under the changing leaf."

And now, having taken a circuit of the garden, we find ourselves back again close to the long bed of roses and the lime-tree hedge.

MARY F. A. TENCH.

## THE SONG-BIRDS OF THE DEESIDE HIGHLANDS.

ALTHOUGH the Highlands of Scotland may not, at first sight, appear an ideal place to hearken to the music of the birds, yet, if one knows where to wander, one may hear almost as many songsters there as in

the Midland Counties of England. To begin with the residents, the missel-thrush should, I think, be mentioned first, as this dauntless bird is to be heard in the Highlands almost wherever there is a single tree, however stunted or weather-beaten, for him to perch upon. He is one of the first birds to commence singing in early spring, and may be heard uttering his loud, defiant notes above the whistling of the gale or in the blinding snowstorm. Comparatively few people seem to be able to distinguish his notes from those of the blackbird. The difference, roughly, is that the missel-thrush utters a few notes sharply, then stops short, and repeats them perhaps several times, coming to a sudden stop at the end of each effort. The blackbird, on the other hand, does not pronounce his notes with the same sharpness, and there is not the same abrupt stop at the end of each bar. His song, also, is not uttered so hurriedly as that of the stormcock. However, it is a very difficult matter to distinguish them when the song is heard in the distance.

The missel-thrush sings in the Highlands from February up to the first week of June, sometimes a little later. He is the first bird to cease singing before the summer moult, and, unlike the song-thrush and blackbird, seems to sing principally during the daytime. Frequently also he sings on the wing, and I have heard him singing loudly while flying fast over a moor devoid of any kind of tree.

The song-thrush—better known in Scotland as the mavis—does not occur so abundantly as the missel-thrush, but is met with in most of the grounds surrounding houses, and also is heard far from any habitation, where his beautiful song is at its best. He does not, as in England, sing all the year round, and I have never heard him during the autumn or winter. His song commences during February, and is most perfect during May and June; I never heard one in song later than July 16th.

The blackbird is also met with abundantly, but prefers the proximity of some village or house, and does not wander amongst the deer forests like the Highland piet, the missel-thrush's Scottish name. He is later in commencing singing than either the missel-thrush or the mavis, and a rather curious fact I have observed is that the blackbirds in a certain district commence singing almost instantaneously after their winter silence. For instance, last spring not a single blackbird was in song before the first week of March, but on the seventh of that month the blackbirds were singing beautifully all along a stretch of wood many miles in length, having apparently begun simultaneously.

That very near relative of the blackbird, the ring-ousel, or mountain blackbird, as it is frequently called, has a song of extraordinary beauty and sadness, and its sweetness is enhanced by the fact that it is often the only song to be heard through wide tracts of moorland solitude. Especially does it sound so when heard in the quietness of a summer evening amongst the Highland glens. They have certain favourite haunts, and seem to prefer a rocky glen or hillside, where numbers are to be found uttering their wild, clear songs. The nest is usually placed in the crevice of a cliff, but sometimes is built amongst the heather. The old birds are extremely wary, which renders the nest difficult to discover. The alarm note is "chack-chack-chack," and is not nearly so ringing as that of the blackbird. The ring-ousels are migrants, arriving on the moors during April and leaving in October.

Wherever there stands the smallest clump of trees, there the chaffinch's cheery song is usually to be heard, and there are few, if any, song-birds—on Deeside at all events—more plentiful than this bright little finch. He usually commences to sing during February. At first his song is very weak, but by the second week of March he has "tuned up," and from March to the end of June his song is to be heard almost everywhere. I have noticed that the chaffinch's song is not nearly so sweet in some districts as it is in others, and it seems to be at its worst in the proximity of a town. The song of the chaffinches which breed in the deer forests is quite different from that of the birds nesting lower down amongst the birch clumps, and, in fact, every six or seven miles the chaffinch's song changes to a great extent. All through the winter the chaffinches—both cock and hen—utter a note resembling "chink-chink," but when spring arrives, the male bird uses the latter note, and also a clear whistle, sounding very much like "whit-whit." The hen uses the note "chink-chink" throughout the year, but especially during the spring, and when the nest is approached. The latest date on which I have heard the chaffinch's song is July 17th. During the autumn the young birds attempt to sing, but their efforts are hardly worthy of the name of a song. There is one district with which I am familiar, about thirty miles from the sea, where the songs of the



BENCH-END IN ST. MARY'S, WIGGENHALL.

chaffinch excel those of any other district in the county, and where the chaffinches begin to sing earlier, and stop singing later than anywhere else.

Throughout suitable localities of Deeside the corn-bunting is met with fairly abundantly, but is more common in the districts bordering the seacoast, where his lazily-uttered song may be heard for hours on end, as he sits perched on a telegraph-post. The corn-bunting is a very late breeder, and I have seen the parent birds collecting food for their young as late as the middle of August.

The dipper or water-ousel has a song which for sweetness would be very hard to surpass. It is only occasionally heard, however, the usual cry being the alarm note, "zeet-zeet!" The song is often uttered on the wing, and continues right through the autumn. When singing, he usually stands on a stone on the edge of some mountain stream, and sings continuously for a considerable time, the song sometimes being used apparently for calling his mate. The dipper is usually the earliest song-bird to nest, and I have seen the mother bird sitting hard on April 1st. They usually return to the same nesting site year after year, even though disturbed. The robin, hedge-sparrow, starling, brown wren, yellow-hammer, lark, greenfinch, and bullfinch, amongst others, are all met with abundantly in most districts. I have noticed, however, that the rose-linnet is comparatively scarce. The birds that sing all through the winter are the robin, starling, common or brown wren, and hedge-sparrow. The yellow-hammer sometimes sings for a short time in autumn.

By far the most common of the summer visitors is the willow-warbler. Arriving about the second week of April, he almost immediately begins his sweet song, being heard everywhere—in the birch woods far up among the lonely glens, and

on the wind-swept grouse moors. The nest is constructed at the beginning of June, and the parent birds are very timorous, showing signs of the greatest anxiety when their nest is approached. The latter is extremely difficult to find, as the entrance to it is at the side, and the nest domed over in such a manner that one might easily tramp upon it and be none the wiser. It is a very pretty sight to observe the parent birds bringing food to their offspring, and I have watched them for hours entering and re-entering their tiny home. They never seem to wander far in search of food, and bring fresh tit-bits for the young birds every few minutes. Their alarm note is a very sweet "whoo-ee-whoo-ee." When they nest near to the habitations of man, their young are very frequently eaten by the domestic cat, the situation of their nests rendering them an easy prey to the feline marauder. Their song is commenced about April 15th, and is continued till the beginning of July. It is resumed about a month later, after the autumn moult, and is continued almost up to the time of their departure South, during September. The garden-warbler is very rarely met with, but I have occasionally noticed it, and once discovered a nest. The cock used to sing hard by the whole day through, while his mate was brooding on the eggs. Though not so abundant as the willow-warbler, the wheatear is found nesting in almost every suitable moorland district. The song is not unlike that of the hedge-sparrow, and is sometimes uttered on the wing. The usual nesting site is a rabbit-burrow, or a chink in a stone wall, and it is often quite impossible to reach the nest. To hear the song-birds at their best one must be afoot just before sunrise on a morning of early June, when there is a peace and stillness in the air not to be met with at any other time or season, and will be repaid a thousand times over for rising to taste of their sweetness.

SETON P. GORDON.

## A HEDGEROW ROMANCE.

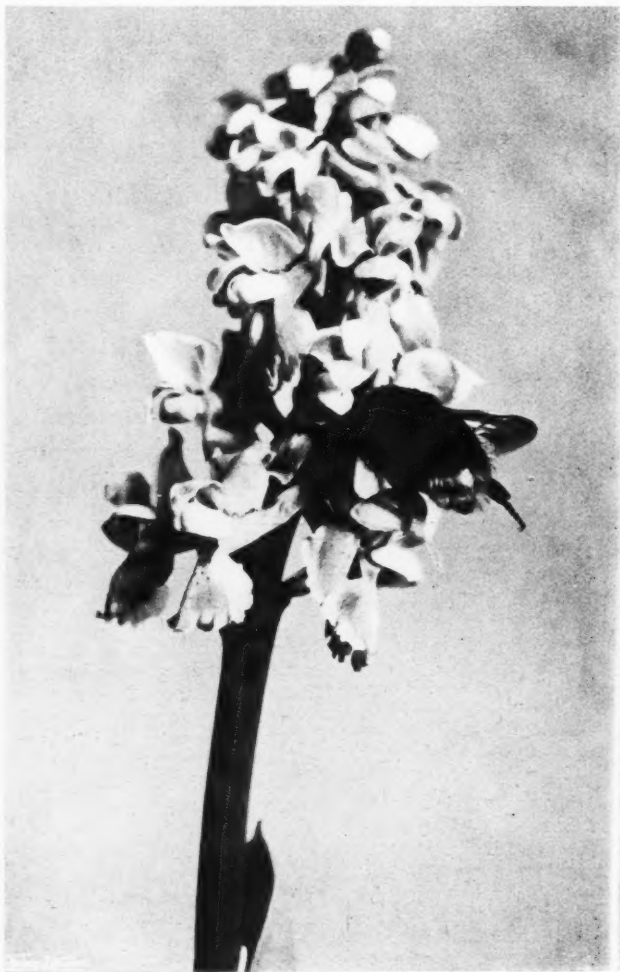


CUCKOO-PINT.

peculiar to the arum, which is so attractive to the gaily-dancing midges. The relationship existing between the midges and the arum is truly romantic and wonderful, the plant being dependent upon the visits of such insects for the fertilisation of its flowers. Indeed the midges are the unwitting agents for the transfer of the pollen from one flower to another, enabling the arum to enjoy the full benefit of cross-fertilisation. How the arum attracts the midges, imprisons, loads them with pollen, and then releases them, is a wonderful and intensely-interesting example of adaptation and specialisation. The midges, attracted by the faint tainted odour of the arum,

DOWN by the old hedgerow that faces to the south-west, there is a great stir of minute insect-life this early spring morning; innumerable members of the diptera are on the wing, dancing and rejoicing in the bright, warm sunshine. Here and there one meets a great crowd of minute midges of the species *Psychoda phallenoides*, some as dusty as a swarm of millers. As we wander on down the lane, we notice that these crowds of midges are invariably collected together near or over a clump of the common arum (*Arum maculatum*), the cuckoo-pint or lords and ladies of our childhood days. The beautiful pale green gnome-cap-shaped spathes of the arums are at their best, and, fully expanded, give a clear view of the curious poker-like spadix; while the soft, warm air brings to us the faint, tainted odour

settle on the poker-like projecting end of the spadix and crawl down into the oval-shaped chamber, formed by the spathe at its base. Here they not only find a pleasant temperature, somewhat higher than that of the outside atmosphere, but also a supply of food to be easily obtained from the succulent thin-walled cells that line the interior of this chamber. Having feasted to satiety,



THE ORCHID AND THE BEE.

the midges start to ascend the spadix, or the walls of the spathe, that they may return to the fresh air and sunshine, only to find themselves prisoners, and all means of retreat for the time being cut off by a stiff, downward-pointing ring of bristles on the spadix



LADEN WITH GOLDEN POLLEN.

at that part where the spathe has a narrow, waist-like constriction, which, although readily permitting them to climb down into the chamber, most effectually prevents their escape. The midges try hard to find some means of regaining their liberty, crawling all about the base of the spadix amongst the male and female flowers, brushing the pollen they have brought in on their bodies and legs off on to the sensitive, slightly sticky surface of the female flowers. Now the female flowers are arranged in rings round the base of the spadix, and above them are the male flowers, while higher up, opposite the constriction of the spathe, are the abortive flowers which have become reduced to the downward-pointing bristles. The female flowers mature first, and are fertilised by the pollen transferred on to them by the midges. After the females have thus been duly fertilised, the males begin to ripen, and the midges wandering amongst them become loaded with their pollen. Then the downward-pointing bristles relax, and the midges, laden with this fresh supply of pollen, are able to make their escape. Set at liberty, they fly away to the next clump of arums, and entering the spathes, fertilise with the pollen they have brought from their previous prison the female flowers of their new one.

Early spring is the ideal season to begin the study of plant-life, and to gain an insight into the many wonderful contrivances by which flowers obtain the benefit of cross-fertilisation through the visits of insects. One of the most delightful and interesting sights we can witness is to sit quietly, one spring morning, in the meadow, or on a sunny bank, where some of our spring-flowering orchids grow, and watch the bumble bees at work amongst the delicate-tinted flowers. Watching carefully, we may see the bee rest upon the broad label-lum of the orchid flower, and thrust its head into the top of the long spur or nectary, and greedily sip the nectar. In doing this the insect presses its head against the viscid bases of the pear-shaped pollen masses, which at once adhere. As the bee withdraws its head from the blossom,

we catch a glimpse of the pollen masses standing erect upon its forehead. By the time the bee has reached the next flower, however, the pollen masses have contracted, and incline forward and outward in such a position that, when the bee thrusts its head into the flower, they will at once come in contact with the stigma, and thus the benefit of cross-fertilisation is obtained.

To those who make it a rule to carry a camera when out for a country ramble, a new and most attractive interest will be added to their walks if they will try to make a photographic record of some of the insects they may see at work amongst the flowers.

F. MARTIN-DUNCAN.

## IN THE GARDEN.

### THE LILACS.

THE breath of spring is in the air, poured from the Lilacs and a hundred flowers open on tree and shrub, but we love the Lilac best at this season. It is a graceful bush, and the heavy odorous clusters bend the leaf-covered shoots until in a high wind it would seem that every twig must snap under the precious burden. But the Lilac has suppleness as well as grace, and of late years many beautiful varieties have been added to the family, so much so that the exquisite colouring of the ordinary Lilac is in danger of disappearing from our gardens. We were speaking to a well-known artist last year in Lilac-time, and one of his regrets was the planting of the newer varieties in place of the sweet-smelling favourite of childhood days. How vivid is the recollection of those heavy clusters which we were glad to gather to fill big bowls in the house, and some tall jars which, we remember, stood on the old oaken sideboard. Our tenderest memories in the garden are of those luxuriant bushes in early summer, and the big flower-bunches tossed in the warm wind. Our artist friend is in a sense fair in his judgment, but the true garden-lover will not forget the many beautiful Lilacs which have been introduced during recent times. If the reader of these notes interested in Lilacs can journey to the Royal Gardens, Kew, where the Lilac collection is in flower, it would be well to do so, as there the older and newer sorts are in simple groups, clearly labelled, and showing the interesting variety of colouring that is now contained in this family. There are forms of our common Lilac, which is botanically known as *Syringa vulgaris*, a native of Northern Persia, and first imported to Vienna, from whence it spread to other European countries. All the forms seem to possess vigorous growth, and flower with remarkable freedom. Of the clear single-flowered whites none excels Marie Legrandy and alba grandiflora, which are now bursting into bloom in the garden of the writer. Souvenir de L. Späth is one of the darkest of all, its flowers being of quite a deep purple shade, but not unpleasantly so. When we think of purple we are apt to associate it with dull crude magentas such as disfigure many races of plants raised by inter-crossing, or the result of sports. Virginité is a pretty delicate pink flower, and is a change from the white, purple, and lilac colourings. The most beautiful double white Lilac is Mme. Lemoine, and of the dark-coloured sorts Alphonse Lavallée, Lemoinei, Mme. Lemoine, and President Grévy may be regarded as the most satisfactory.

### HINTS ON GROWING THE LILAC.

It must be a poor garden that will not grow the Lilac. About two years ago we moved an old plant with care from one garden to another with little hope of its recovering, but it is now opening its flower clusters. The soil in which it is planted is quite poor, and no special attention has been paid to the shrub since it was planted. This treatment is not, of course, to be recommended. The incident is mentioned to show the extreme vigour of the Lilac. A group we planted last autumn was given a good loamy soil, and during the dry weather of April water was copiously given, with a little weak liquid manure to help the shrubs over a critical time on a dry hilltop. If this assistance had not been forthcoming



HAWK MOTH FERTILISING A FLOWER.

we might have lost the entire collection. One great drawback to the success of the Lilac is the accumulation of suckers at the base of the stems. The removal of these constitutes the only pruning, if such we may call it, the shrub requires, but timely attention to this results in a more vigorous growth and a greater abundance of flowers. It is obvious that a shrub crowded with suckers is robbed of much of its natural support, and eventually the flowers are less numerous and the growth weaker. We hope soon to draw attention to the absolute necessity of pruning shrubs regularly to maintain their vigour and flowering strength. It is not an arduous work, but by giving the cutting back or thinning out required, the shrub is maintained in its natural strength.

## RANDOM NOTES.

**Planting Water-lilies (Nymphæas).**—The Water-lilies it is desired to plant should be ordered at once, this being the best time to put them either into tubs or in ponds. It is possible for those who have no spacious lakes or ponds to enjoy the beautiful flowers of the Nymphæas, but where only tubs are available the selection must be restricted to the smaller-flowered hybrids and varieties. The two most suitable for tubs are *Nymphæa pygmaea*, which has white flowers, and the pretty little yellow *Helvola*. An ordinary cask or barrel cut in half will suffice. Make a hole in the bottom, and plug it tightly, the object of this being to let off the water when necessary. Everything depends, of course, upon the size of the garden as to the dimensions of the tubs, but the ordinary butter tub will contain a plant of either of the two Nymphæas mentioned above. Over the bottom of the tub place what is called drainage, that is, a layer or two of broken pots, and then good loam mixed with leaf-mould; but as Nymphæas appreciate rich and muddy soil, add manure to the loam if it is poor. Place the roots 2 in. beneath the water, and if the roots are well established flowers may be expected within a few weeks.

**Planting Water-lilies in Ponds and Lakes.**—Where the garden contains a pond or lake, the culture of Nymphæas may be undertaken on a large scale. Well we remember a July day in a Sussex garden, in which an almost complete collection of species and hybrids was grown. The plants had spread into broad leafy groups, and it was our privilege to punt near the flowers and look into those wondrous masses of petals, which scintillated in the hot sun. Crimson and gold, yellow and red, and dainty shades of rose and pink were to be seen in these big flower-stars of the water surface. The lake was fringed with many moisture-loving plants, and among them was the tall Buttercup (*Ranunculus Lingua*), which we have never since seen, though with the native Forget-me-not clustering round the stem it formed a summer flower picture which will never fade from memory. As the evening shadows creep over the lake this flower glory sleeps until the sun again opens the floating petals, and brings colour and beauty to the water garden. The roots should be planted in wicker baskets, one to each basket, and filled with the same kind of soil as advised when growing the Water-lilies in tubs. Sink them from 2 ft. to 3 ft. beneath the surface, and choose as the nucleus of a collection the four beautiful hybrids raised by M. Latour-Marliac. The most popular, perhaps, is the yellow-coloured *Chromatella*, which, with the other

three, is very reasonable in price. Albida is white, as the name suggests, and the two remaining ones should be carnea, flesh-coloured, and Flammea, in which the petals are stained with red, purple, and pink shades, a brilliant mingling of colours which it is difficult to describe. There is a large and increasing host of Nymphæas, and we recommend *Laydekeri fulgens*, crimson; *elisiana*, carmine; *Robinsoni*, rose and white; *gloriosa*, rose and rich red; *Sanguinea*, orange and carmine; and *igneae*, rose-crimson. These descriptions only convey an impression of the colourings; the flowers must be seen in the morning sun to realise their brilliant beauty. Water-lilies may be used in the decoration of the table, and for this purpose must be gathered on the point of opening.

## THE FLEECY FLY.

THERE was a well-known story, some years ago in the Highlands, of a certain Professor Fleg, who was held imprisoned in a little burn where he was fishing by a truculent bull for very many hours. He was safe in the river, whither the bull would not follow him; but as often as he tried to creep out, whether on the one side or the other, the bull would cross the river by a ford a little lower down and hunt him back into the water again. He had no more powerful weapon of offence or defence than a single-handed trout-rod, with which he flicked flies from time to time into the bull's hide; but the hooks only had the effect of making the brute more cross than ever; and, besides, the loss of flies became serious after a while, in the pecuniary sense, so that it was not till the shades of night afforded him some concealment that the learned but shivering Professor was able to come out of the river and make his way to the lodge.

The present story of the angler and the sheep has a certain analogy to that other, but the analogy is very incomplete, inasmuch as the Southern sheep is a far less formidable animal than the Highland bull. The story is really quite a curious one, though it is not very flattering to the skill of the scientific fly-tier. It seems to show that on occasions a less scientific lure, perhaps by its very novelty, may have more attractions for a highly-sophisticated fish. There was no doubt about the sophistication of this particular fish—he would have had to be super-naturally obtuse not to have learnt cunning, so many and such finished anglers had done their very best to educate him by passing over him in the cleverest way possible the most beautiful of lures. He would have none of them. He sometimes paid them the compliment of coming out from his haunt under the bank in order to look at them; but he did no more, turning back from the inspection with a satisfied disgust that was equivalent to telling the man who made the fly or the man who fished it that something more artistic in the way of an imitation of a natural insect was required to make a fool of him. He was a well-known fish, for he was said to be bigger by a full half-pound than any that had yet been taken from the stream. In point of fact, he proved only about a quarter of a pound heavier; but this is anticipating events. On the great day that the great fish came at length to the landing-net, the angler began to cast over him with the skill and care that were the inevitable result of long habit, but at the same time with despair at his heart, so often had hope been deferred of inducing this particular fish to be his victim; and as he sent back his fly to cast for the third time, and began the forward stroke, he was aware of a slight tug and resistance at the end of the line. He was not one of the tiro kind that lets his fly go to grass; neither was he so unfamiliar with his surroundings as not to know that there were no bushes behind him. Therefore he turned round with an exclamation of astonishment and beheld a sheep regarding him with rather doubtful benevolence, and a thoughtful expression on its face that looked as if it might indicate a design to butt him into the river. But even as these possible intentions of the sheep passed through his mind, and he realised that what had arrested his fly for a moment was its catching the fleece of the animal, the fly itself had gone forward and out on the water very little affected by the momentary check. The angler was on the point of saying something to the sheep about its folly in getting where it might be hooked, and where it had spoiled a beautiful cast, when his hand, in the very act of drawing up the fly to make another throw, was arrested, yet again, by an unexpected tug; but this time the tug came from the water, not the land, and there was no manner of doubt about the cause of it. A fish had taken the fly, and a good fish too. The reel went with a scream, as the fish rushed down the river, and the usual kind of fight began that has been retailed in all fishing stories since the first. All good stories, of course, and only in one way—pleasantly. This had (from the fisherman's point of view) the extremely pleasant ending of a fine fish—his notorious and very sophisticated fish, finding its way at length into the landing-net.

And when the fisherman came to take the fly from its mouth and examine the fly he found it adorned with a small fleecy feather, as he first thought, but then saw to his surprise that it was really a tiny piece of fleece. What had happened was that the hook had torn an atom of wool from the sheep's fleece, and



A. H. Robinson TESTING HIS TACKLE.

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gone down, thus adorned, into the water, and the fish, of so much ancient wisdom, astonished out of all his craft by the strange spectacle presented to him, had tasted the unknown object, to see if it was good, and found it altogether other than that which he had supposed.

So that was the end of that fish, and in the result it proved to have offered up its life as a vicarious sacrifice to save that of sundry others of its kind, for the incident so impressed the angler to whom it happened that he now never will go fishing without a tuft of sheep's wool on his fly; and, as a consequence, many a trout is scared away whom the lure would otherwise have attracted. Thus, there is a striking moral to the tale—so obvious that persons who pursue the contemplative recreation may be left to meditate on it for themselves; and if any shall ask in any ribald spirit how it happened that the camera was on hand just at this particular psychological moment of the approach of the sheep to the angler *a tergo*, they may be reminded that an episode of this kind can be rehearsed over again—with the exception, always, of the capture of the trout (so important in the story, but not in the photograph), and that if a man sits with his



A. H. Robinson.

## AN INTERESTED SPECTATOR.

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face to the river in a field with an old sheep in it, the curiosity of the sheep may be relied on to lead him up to a close examination, even if he does not show his displeasure by butting the angler out of the field and into the river. The camera would do well to be on hand when that *dénouement* happens.

## WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

## PROBLEMS OF THE WEATHER.

SURELY bits—the right bits—of the country are never more enjoyable than on warm sunny days in April, days such as this April has brought us in such numbers. I know an angle of a wood facing south and west, which is just now a sheet of blackthorn blossom. Inside the wood the ground is almost carpeted with violets, white and purple in nearly equal quantities; along the edge the celandine and ground ivy make an embroidery of ruddy purple and yellow, and just beyond them on the grass the cowslip bells are breaking into chrome. Here, completely sheltered from the wind which still blows, though lightly, from the east, the air is as still and hot as on an August noon, and filled with the murmur of innumerable bees which through the blackthorn sprays—honey bees without number, spring bees, the one sex russet and the other black, generally chasing each other like swallows over the face of the bushes, red-tailed velvety bumble bees which bump about among the blossom with as much disturbance as if they were sparrows, and finally the huge yellow-bellied ruffian, Emerson's own "burly, dozing bumble-bee." And among them are the butterflies. Within twenty feet there were one morning on the blackthorn no fewer than three peacocks and at least a dozen small tortoise-shells. Perhaps the fact that it is so long since one saw anything of the kind—not since the blackberry blossom of last autumn—has something to do with making it seem so very good; but very good it certainly is.

## HIBERNATING BUTTERFLIES.

There appear, indeed, to be an unusual number of hibernated butterflies about this spring. It has seemed so to me; and others in this neighbourhood have acquired the same impression. Brimstones, peacocks, and tortoise-shells are amazingly abundant, and two or three appearances of Camberwell Beauties have already been reported, one having been seen a couple of hundred yards from my own house. It was on the high road and settled on the herbage by the hedge. The gentleman who saw it—a good entomologist, not likely to be mistaken—endeavoured to catch it with the cap which he was wearing; but the insect took alarm, and flying high into the air was caught by a stiffish wind, to be drifted out of sight and beyond all chance of pursuit. Its would-be captor was near enough to it when it sat to be able to say that it was distinctly of the "Continental" type—that is to say, that the ribbon along the edges of the wings was of a richer buff than it used to be in the British variety.

## THE "BRITISH" CAMBERWELL BEAUTY.

I know that there are many who are sceptical about there ever having been a British variety of Camberwell Beauty, maintaining that all the specimens that ever were caught in England had come across the Channel; but nothing will ever convince me (or anyone else who collected thirty years ago) that this is the fact. As a boy I assisted at the catching of a British specimen. It was a larger-winged insect than the Continental or the American *Antipias*, with a border almost too pale to be called cream coloured—the dead white cream colour of a new cream cheese. I saw other English specimens in my youth, and at the time there was no doubt in, I think, any collector's mind that the British and Continental varieties were easily to be told apart. It seems now as if the British insect was extinct; and in course of time, in collections, the borders of the Continental ones have a tendency to fade, so that, after ten or a dozen years, they come to be as light as, and not distinguishable from, the originally much paler English ones. So there is no way of proving that there used to be a difference in the colouring. Therefore entomologists to-day are inclined to say that we of the old days were mistaken—that the pale borders were simply faded specimens. They were not faded specimens. This particular one of which I spoke had, seemingly, been out of the pupa only a few hours—certainly not more than a day or two, and fading was out of the question. That specimen was

valued at £5, and changed hands, in an exchange, on the basis of that valuation. Had it had a rich buff border, proclaiming its Continental origin, it would not at that time have been valued at more than £2. There is danger that the old British Camberwell Beauty will come to be regarded as a myth, because it is now apparently extinct; but personally I believe it to be just as assured a fact that the insects really existed as that large coppers used to be caught in England.

## DOUBLE-BROODED MOTHS.

If hibernated insects are indeed more numerous this year than usual, it must be the result of some peculiarity in the weather that we have had. We know that the heat of last summer had a queer effect on various lepidoptera, a large number of species being double-brooded which ordinarily have but one brood in a year. The insect in which this vagary was most widely noted was, perhaps, the poplar hawk moth, which ordinarily emerges towards the end of May or in June. The caterpillars become full-fed and turn to pupæ in August or early September, and the pupæ remain underground until May or June comes round again. Last year, however, it was reported from various parts of the country that the moths, instead of waiting until this summer, were coming out again last September, and even in October. A good many other species, which ordinarily have but one generation in the year, had two, and the phenomenon has generally been ascribed to the unusual mildness of the autumn of 1905. One would hardly expect the same conditions, however, to be favourable to the lives of hibernating butterflies. On the contrary, the prolongation of summer beyond the usual period would naturally tend to keep them on the wing so much the longer, with the greater chance of catastrophe and premature demise. One would rather ascribe it to the mildness of the winter if it was not for the too recent recollection of the severity of the greater part of March. But, whatever the cause, in the locality I write from it seems impossible to doubt the fact; and it is highly probable that, with only average weather henceforward, the year 1906 will be remembered by entomologists as another "Camberwell Beauty year."

## HYPERCRITICAL INSECTS.

The influence of weather on insects, however, is a problem of which we know very little. Even the kind of weather in which moths like best to fly is highly problematical. In a general way it may be said that they do not fly in moonlight, yet another collector shares with me the recollection, now some five years old, of what was probably the most amazingly abundant flight of moths—all kinds of moths—that either of us ever saw, along a hedge brilliantly lighted by a moon almost at the full. The flight lasted for, perhaps, an hour, and then ceased abruptly. Also, moths do not like a wind; a little from the south or west they can put up with, but a touch of north or east usually drives them into shelter. Yet almost every entomologist has had experience of nights when the moths came crowding to the sugar in an east wind so stiff that they had difficulty in keeping foothold on the trees. They do not like rain; and it is pretty safe to say that when it rains shortly before their proper flying time, so that they cannot get out from their hiding-places without brushing against wet grass or leaves, they will stay at home that night. Yet after it has begun to rain later in the evening is often the best time to attract them to a light; and they will sometimes go on flying for half-an-hour or an hour after the rain has been falling so hard that it is a wonder that they can live in it at all. As a general rule, what they want is a soft, warm, still, cloudy, moonless night; but even then, what seems to be an ideal night is often spoiled by a little too much sultriness or a touch of thunder in the air. Most collectors, indeed, can tell with some certainty what is likely to be a bad night, though, even then, they will occasionally be wrong. But the longest experience is often disappointed in predicting that a given night is favourable. Moths are as finicking about their weather as the most sophisticated trout.

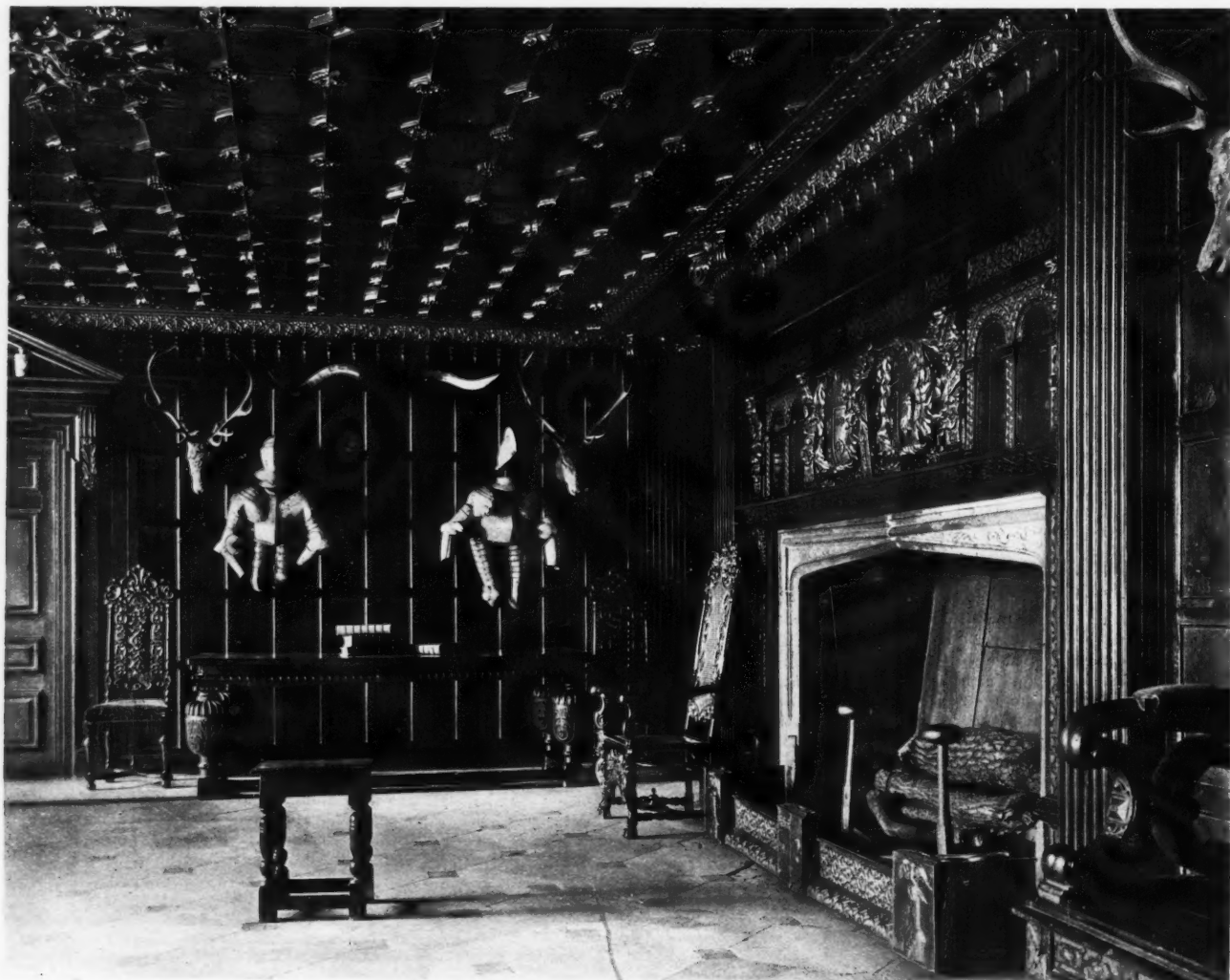
H. P. R.



**T**HREE Kentish parishes of Sutton lie together a few miles to the south-east of Maidstone. Earl Leofwine the outlaw, one of the three sons of Godwine who fell at Hastings, had lands here which came to Odo of Bayeux, who was lord of all three manors—Chart Sutton, Town Sutton, and East Sutton—Domesday recording Adam, son of Hubert, as his tenant at East Sutton. When Odo lost his lands for rebellion the King took them to himself. After this the manors passed through many hands, never long abiding in the same name. William, Earl of Albemarle, had the three, and his daughter brought them to her husband, Baldwin de Bethune. Baldwin's daughter Alice had them on her marriage, in the fifth year of King John, with William Marshal the younger, afterwards Earl of Pembroke. On her death the Earl married the King's sister Eleanor, and died childless by both his wives. Eleanor, his widow, vowed herself to widowhood, and broke her vow for Simon de Montfort. After this second husband's death in rebellion she was banished out of the land, and the Sutton estates were settled on William de Valence, the King's brother of the half-blood, who had married a granddaughter of the first Marshal Earl of Pembroke. Thenceforward

Town Sutton has been known as Sutton Valence. William's son Aymer, Earl of Pembroke, died in Paris in 1324, after a life of riding and warring, and the Suttons came to his sister's husband, John Hastings of Bergavenny, whose grandson was created Earl of Pembroke in 1347. Two generations later Reynold, Lord Grey of Ruthyn, was lord here as next of kin to Aymer de Valence, and in his time the Suttons went clean out of the blood; for with Sir Edmund Mortimer he was taken at Pilleth by Owain ab Gruffydd, the "Owen Glendower" of the history book, and for payment of his vast ransom the Suttons were sold, Chart Sutton and Sutton Valence passing to the St. Legers. East Sutton thereafter went from hand to hand; one of the King's heralds was its lord under Henry V., Darells and Yorks following him.

Under Henry VIII. East Sutton became again the portion of famous men. Sir Henry Guldeford, the King's standard-bearer and master of the horse, died seised of the manor, and Thomas Cromwell had it, but exchanged it for other lands before his fall. At last, about the year 1546, the manor of East Sutton was bought by one Thomas Argall, and descended from him to his son Richard. The Argalls, though lords of the





"COUNTRY LIFE."

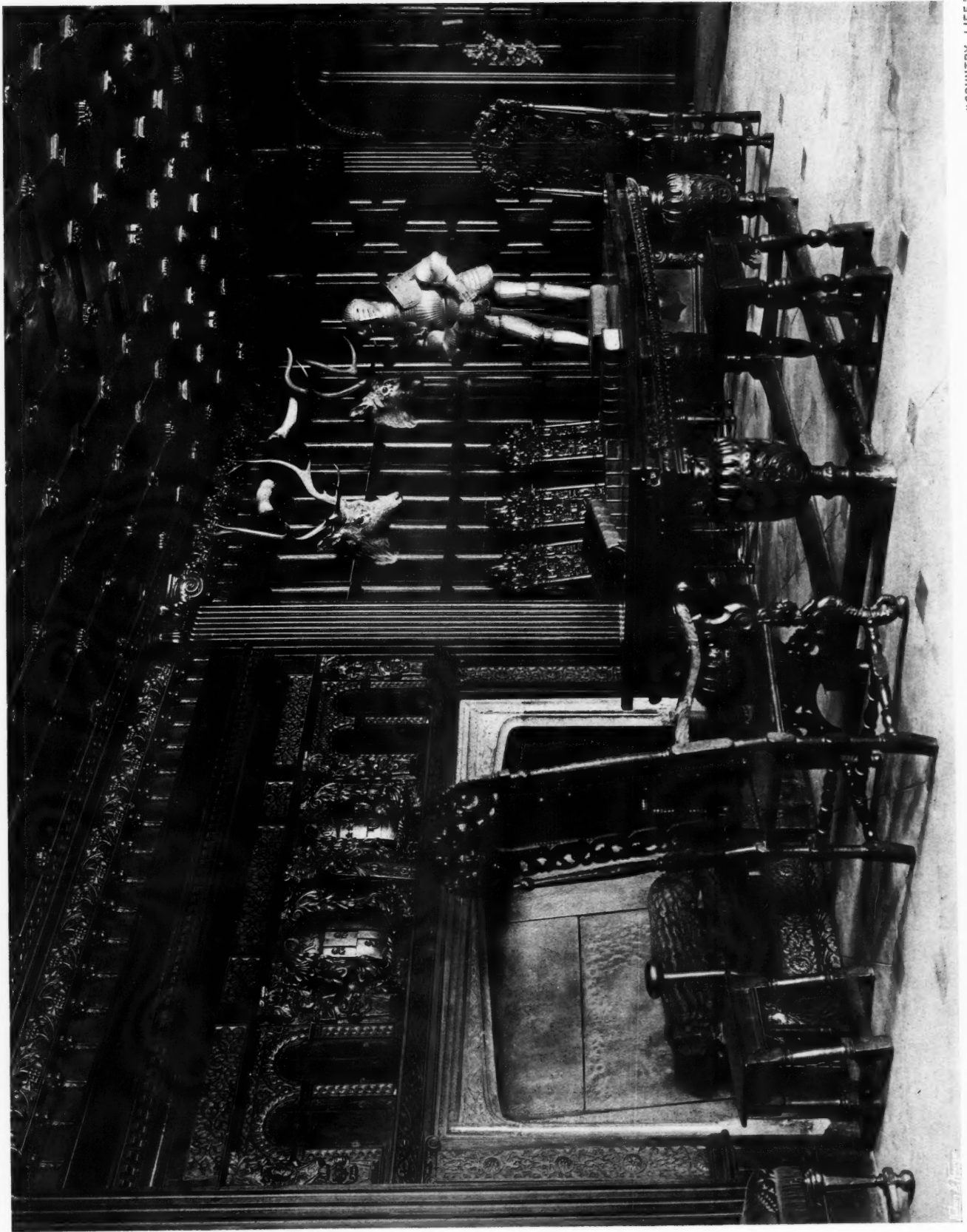
THE HALL SCREEN, DATE 1570.

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"COUNTRY LIFE."

NORTH END OF MUSIC-ROOM.



"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE KNIGHT'S CHAIR.

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manor, were not sole landowners in the parish. Contemporary with Richard Argall was Robert Filmer from Otterden, who bought an estate in East Sutton. This gentleman's son, Sir Edward, married with a daughter of Richard Argall and bought the manor from her brother, John Argall of Colchester, in 1610.

Sir Edward Filmer, whose descendant is now lord of East Sutton, lies with his wife in the Filmer chapel in East Sutton church under a most curious brass, an oblong plate upon which is engraved his figure in half-armour—breastplate and tassets, pauldrons and brassarts—a high ruff, loose breeches, and boots to the knee. A rich sword-belt holds up a long broadsword with finger-guard and quills. His lady prays beside him in a wide coif, veil, and ruff, with ribbon bows at her bodice.



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IN THE STAIRCASE ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Below her are her nine daughters, and as many sons are ranged below their father, the eldest being armed, and the fourth having a skull above his head to show that he went to his grave in his father's lifetime. The inscription shows that at his death, in 1629, Sir Edward had been forty-four years married.

Robert Filmer, the eldest son, the little gentleman in armour at the foot of this brass, was knighted by King Charles early in his reign. Never did king reward a more faithful servant, for Robert Filmer, in his "Patriarcha; or the Natural Power of Kings Asserted," and in his "Power of Kings, and in Particular that of the King of England," put forward the sacred books of the divine-right party. Hobbes had contended for the sovereign power while urging that it was derived from a contract with the people, but stout Sir Robert Filmer would have no such paltering with sacred things. For him the King enjoyed his absolute and

sovereign rule by right of hereditary descent from Adam, the King-patriarch; his rights were unalienable as absolute, although they might be limited by his own consent with a limitation which his will might break at any time.

Long after Filmer's death, the Royalist party hurried his works into print as an antidote for the troubles of the times, and English republicans met the Kentish knight's fancies with angry derision. Another gentleman of Kent, surly Algernon Sidney, "true rebel and republican," trampled amongst Filmer's conclusions in his "Discourse concerning Government," a book whose remorseless logic takes Filmer for a butt and a text. The great name of Locke was with the adversaries, and it was agreed that "so much glib nonsense was never put together in well-sounding English."

Eight years after the publication of "Patriarcha," divine right in England was swept away for ever by Filmer's opponents.

The critics were too late to harm the knight, who was safe from controversy in the Filmer vault at East Sutton; but in his lifetime he had his share of suffering for his opinions. His house is said to have been ten times plundered by the Parliament's troopers, and the owner prisoned in Leeds Castle. But his lands remained with his name; he does not seem to have been forced to "compound" for them, and he died at home in 1653, leaving the reputation among his fellow-royalists of one "affable, learned, and orthodox." His elder son died unmarried, and the younger became, in 1674, the first of the line of the baronets of East Sutton, of whom the present Sir Robert Marcus Filmer is the tenth. After the Civil War times the family had peace, and its history is that of a house of country gentry living at home in peace with their neighbours, one of those Kentish houses whom Ingoldsby mustered to the "Ingoldsby wedding" with

Faggess and Finch-Hattons, Tokes, Derings and Deedses.

Their old mansion of Tudor and Jacobean buildings is in a beautiful park of seventy acres, a lake before it, hard by the church, and in sight of Little Charlton House, their seat before the Argalls sold them the park. It lies in a corner of Kent which still remains beautiful and remote, a country of woods and fields and hedgerows, of old cottages and roadside inns, of grey church towers and castle ruins. Its brick gables and tall chimneys might have served Ingoldsby as a model for his Ingoldsby hall, and its interior has oak panels and bossed ceilings worthy of their case. The modern oak carving over the great fireplace in the hall has the shield of Argall and Scott for the parents of old Sir Edward Filmer, and that of Filmer and Monro for the eighth baronet, who died in 1857. A tall armchair of the Restoration age heads the Elizabethan table, with its pillared legs and massive stretchers, facing the fine sixteenth century suit of fluted armour.

East Sutton church, seen on the high ground across the grass lawns of the house, is a fourteenth century church with later additions. The beautiful east window of a chapel on the

northern side is, perhaps, its best feature, the shields of Valence, Hastings, and St. Leger remaining in the stained glass of its cinquefoils. The east window of the chancel is modern. In the south chapel's window is more armorial glass; the shield of Richard, Duke of York, the shield of Mortimer, and the shield of Sir Henry Guldeford set in a Garter; and amongst other pieces of old glass we have a head and shoulders of Our Lady, above whose glory curls a scroll with "Ecce ancilla d'ni." It is matter for wonder that such a figure should be here, for when, in 1643, Cornet May of the Parliament's army came to search the tower for arms, he broke screen and painted windows, as well as tearing the surplice in strips and carrying away the prayer-book. The western doorway in the tower is of the age of the Wars of the Roses.

The south chapel is the old burying-place of the Filmers, and was that of the Argalls before them, a tablet commemorating



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THE DINING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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## THE HOUSE AND CHURCH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Richard Argall of East Sutton, esquire, who died in the Armada year, leaving five sons and six daughters alive. Mary, his second wife, a daughter of Sir Reynold Scott of Scott's Hall, married after his death Laurence Washington, an official of the Court of Chancery. The church was restored at the end of the last century, but it keeps much of its character, and, as will be seen, its tower and battlemented porch make a pretty picture rising above the old gravestones and grass-grown yard.

The house may after this be fairly described as one of the ancestral homes in which no country is so rich as England. This country has been fortunate in one respect; since the landing of William the Conqueror in 1066 no hostile army has marched across its fields, and the various civil wars, though destructive of

much which, had it been preserved, would have been precious treasure to-day, nevertheless spared the country mansions.

## HEART O' THE OAK.

## I.—THE PILLERS.

SINCE the first cuckoo, weeks ago, their talk had been of little but the coming of the anemones and bluebells, the pairing of the birds in hedgerow and brake and copse, and all the merry bustle of the spring of the year; so that you might have imagined that, hale men and buxom women as



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## HOUSE AND STABLES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

well as the younger sort, the posy-verses of the last Valentine's Day had left them all poetical crazy. But a little acquaintance with the good folk and their business would have instructed you how much hung for them on the chances of air and wind and dew; and you would then have watched as jealously as they for that half-hour's frost of an April night that will stiffen the sap of trees, and set wood and bark together past the power of any pilling-iron to part them.

Every year, as early as the middle of April or as late as the middle of May, they set forth in a band, and the whole village assembled to see them off. The two great waggons, packed the day before, and the polewain on which the long ladders trailed almost to the ground, would be had out of the sheds at the town end; and the talk and laughter of the villagers would mingle with the singing of the larks and the bleating of the lambs on the bare hillsides and all the noises of the morning. The horses would be brought out and backed into the shafts with a great clatter and stamping, and the brass discs and buckles of the harness would flash and jangle in the sun. The manes of the horses had been decked with red, blue, and white ribbons, and straw had been trimmed and plaited into their tails; and while lads frolicked and ran in and out, the smallest of the children would be held up to tie rosettes and favours to the whips. The foremost waggon was always hung round with crocks and kettles like a tinker's caravan, and to this the three or four women who were to accompany the men would mount. Good-byes would be said, handkerchiefs waved, and a man would take the head of the leading horse. The crocks and kettles would set up a clangour; the second waggon, that carried the saws and axes and bolting-irons, would fall in; and the lads would run behind the long wain, swinging on the ladders that rocked up and down like a rantipole. So they would pass between the dewy hawthorn hedges, and at the turn of the road, where the wheels were clogged to drop down the hill, the village would lose sight of them for maybe three weeks or a month.

Sometimes they piled (or "barked," as some call it) for others, being then paid by the day or contract, sometimes they bought the bark themselves to sell again to the tanners; and when the timber was not to come down at once they left the stripped trees, naked and white and ghostly, to stand for another year that the sap might retire and the tree season as it stood. While the men worked in the woods, the women cooked and mended, plied the pilling-irons on the smaller branches, stacked the bark into light sheds, and perchance plaited osiers or wove straw basses for beehives meanwhile. Sometimes they slept in inns and farm-kitchens, and sometimes barns and sheds were prepared against their coming.

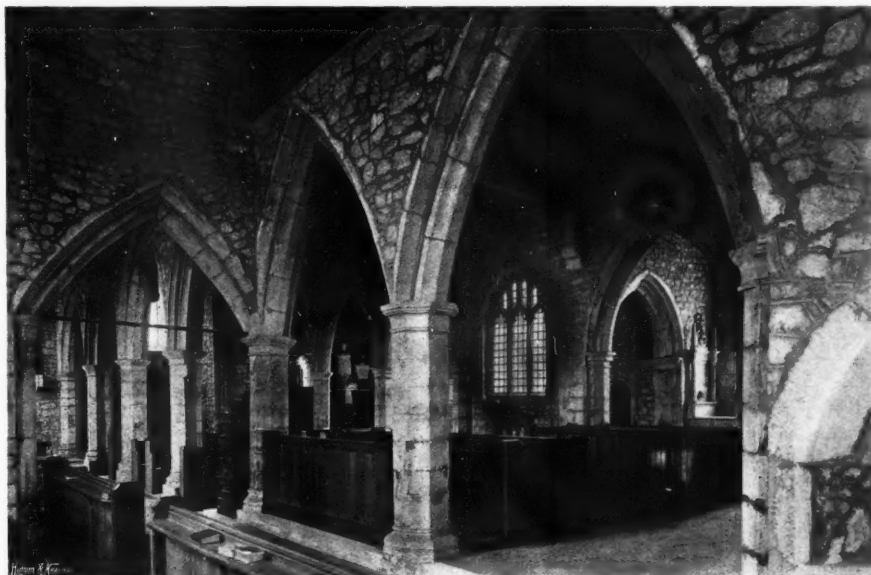
After this fashion they came, on a May afternoon, to the Ladyshaws Wood, that belongs to the township of Portsannet under the headland; and from the height several of them saw, for the first time in their lives, the sea. The warden of Portsannet and his bailiff grow the oaks of the Ladyshaws wide and spreading, for tough, crooked pieces for the knees and ribs of ships; and in the higher wood the columns of the pines are crowded together to make the taller masts. Two score of them, oaks and pines, had been marked to come down and the placid bailiff, red-faced, and smoking very strong tobacco, had first taken the Pillers round the woods, and then shown them their accommodation, a small cluster of barns and a penthouse that had once been a smithy. They made a fire that night on the disused forge-hearth; and as they sat about it they told one another how fair and settled the air was, and how grandly the Ladyshaws were



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FROM HOUSE TO CHURCH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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INSIDE EAST SUTTON CHURCH.

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EAST SUTTON CHURCHYARD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

golding, and spoke of the sea and ships, and of the sea-worm that bores the oak, and of bark and tanning and markets and prices. Soft clouds lay low to the earth; scents and odours, now from the pine woods, now from the hawthorn hedges, and again the whiff of Portsannet and the sea, drifted in tracts on the mild air; and if now and then a man winked at his neighbour and said something about a pheasant or an egg, it was no such great matter after all. They sought their blankets early; the retriever bitch and the two terriers stretched themselves across the thresholds of the sheds; and the whole company slept long before moonrise.

High in the dark laithe the four women lay on the top of a half-cut stack; and Jessie Wheeler had avoided the corner immediately under the great square hole that yawned in the floor of the loft overhead. Instead, she had spread her blanket near a small vent-hole that had been made by the leaving out of a wall-stone. Against this aperture she could barely distinguish the shape of her arm as the tips of her fingers touched the floor only a couple of feet above her. The women had taken off only their upper garments; and the niche where they lay smelt of stale hay, and the trusses crackled and whispered with each of their movements. A short harsh call outside startled her, and she raised herself on her elbow to listen. The call was repeated; and then there stole on the May night a series of long liquid notes. A nightingale had begun to sing in the thorn hedge. The sound ceased, and the notes seemed to take flight and diminish and die away. She waited. Again came the low liquid call, and broke into trills that increased in volume. Another long pause left the air trembling; and then, as if by the giving way of some barrier, the full blood of song gushed like a torrent from the bird's throat. The piercing melody filled the night; it mounted and hovered and rang under the low clouds, as it under rafters; it spread to the woods and out over the headland; and Jessie's heart lifted, and her lips shaped the name of Willie Ramsey. To poets the nightingale might sing of unattainable things; to Jessie it sang only of Willie—Willie had all. The torrent of melody filled the dark loft where she lay with memories and images only of Willie; and she closed her eyes in bliss as the bird sang ever louder and clearer. What the beginning had been she could hardly have told. They had sought the nuts and blackberries together, and watched the trout in the shallow brook, and popped the bags of the foxgloves. They had played and kissed and wrangled; and he, too, with the other lads, had twisted the stalks of the pulling-grass into her hair, and pointed at her for her outbursts of passion. . . . Perhaps her hair had been the beginning. Once the children had plaited chaplets of green leaves for their hair, and on hers Willie had set the leaves of the copper beech, and laughed that hair and leaves should be of one colour. Long after, she had set her hair in a coil above her white nape; and when someone had again made sport of this, in place of the fit of temper had come quick tears. . . . The memories came faster as the bird sang ecstatically—of the season when their companionship had seemed, like Willie's calf-voice, all broken and here and there; of the day when she had fashioned the straw mell-doll for the corner of the last stack, and the farm men had laughed and jested at her "babe," and Willie had seen her miserable flush. . . . and then of the evening in the milking-shed when he had so kissed her that it had seemed wonderful they could ever have kissed before as boy and girl. In spite of her passionateness, then he had loved her. . . . From the yard came the sound of a horse's stamping, and the dragging of the chain, and the munching at the crib; she heard it even through the song. A faint light glimmered in the vent-hole—the moon had broken for a moment through the soft clouds, and the nightingale sang as though the hand of a man had seized him and were crushing the heart within him. . . . And so they had become lovers, and had been so for well-nigh a year. The moon became clouded again; the bird's song changed to lovely, aching notes, that somehow Jessie could hardly bear; and her hand stole to her breast and sought the little gold locket that contained the tiny ring of hair that Willie's mother had cut from him while yet he was scarcely bigger than the mell-doll.

The morning star shone over the sea, and the first cock crowed down in Portsannet. The nightingale ceased to sing. The moon still rode high among the clouds; but a breeze came from the east, and a greyness and lifting altered the air. The cocks made an increasing din. A splendour of rose and gold, in the midst of which the sun burned like a brazier, turned the vault to an ineffable blue, and flushed the tops of the Ladyshaws. And as the earliest of the Pillers to rise trudged down the meadows for water, he saw that a man-o'-war, under half canvas, stood motionless beyond the headland. He stopped to watch the men who moved about her like ants, and saw the little fleck of white as she dropped anchor.

## II.—THE LADYSHAWS.

The woods resounded with the calling of the men, the hacking of the grub-axe at roots, the clash of irons flung down, and the ceaseless snapping and crackle of the undergrowth. The

wide spaces that had been cleared for the fall of the oaks were trampled and trodden, mould and bluebells and the dead brown bracken; and hazel and thorn and dark holly were speckled white as if with cuckoo-spit where the bill-hooks had shorn through them. Now and then men, stacking the brushwood about the clearings, peered into it for eggs and nests; and the frightened birds fluttered continually here and there, refusing to leave their young.

At the gnarled oak that stood lowest down the slope of the wood Willie Ramsey and Jerry Holmes were already at work with the great-axe. They swung alternately, and the white chips lay thick over their boots, and the deep notch, that was rapidly becoming deeper, made the tree look as if it was balanced on a blunt apex. A few yards beyond the flying chips lay the great double saw, a tin of grease for easing it, and a coil of rope; and Jerry's wrinkled face twitched into wonderful folds and creases as he delivered each blow. As again, for the tenth time, the thought of the forenoon drinking that the women would bring occurred to him, he grunted "Spell," dropped the head of his axe, and leaned on the heft to recover his breath.

"Ye look thirsty, too, my lad," he observed by and by, glancing up at Willie.

Willie passed his fingers across his brow and looked at them all wet. He was tall, black-browed, and black-haired, and his neck lifted at his chest with his breathing, and the muscles of his forearm started sharply as his fingers played on the heft of his axe.

"Ay, this ought to be grand stuff for ribs, if th' chopping of it's aught to reckon by," he answered.

"Nay, ye're limber enow; 'tis owd bones like me it finds out," quoth Jerry, grinning. "'Tis th' season o' life wi' ye to think more o' th' women nor th' drink they bring. I ken your ways; but me, I'm naughbut rare and thirsty."

"Well, maybe I'se mend o' that."

"Ay, Jessie 'll mend ye, if ye're mendable. Ye may laugh; ginger's for game, and al'ays was—"

"They ken best where th' shoe pinches that has it on, Jerry."

"Ay, when they get it on; thou'rt not shod yet, lad. Well, wisdom's wasted o' youth; let's to th' ribs an' knees again—Spell—"

They turned to with the axes again.

Somewhere up the wood a man was setting a hone to a bill-hook, and away to the right they had begun to chop at another tree. Willie and Jerry were well ahead, and nowhere were they sawing yet; and as the chips started and flew, and the keen axes cut deeper and deeper into the bole, and Jerry's mouth and eyebrow flickered and dipped, they began to pass round the tree and to cut more carefully here and there. A whiff of strong tobacco came down the glade, and the placid bailiff stood and watched them.

"Ye'll be almost ready for th' ropes and cross-cut," he remarked, "and then there 'll be one on 'em down.—Eh, they must ha' seen some scenes, must these oaks! Ay, they must. Are ye acquainted wi' these parts? No, say ye? Eh, things has happened i' this neighbourhood, hundreds o' years back. It were off th' Head, yonder, that Paul Jones fought, that ye 'll ha' heard tell of.—No! Well, that's surprising!"

He continued to talk in his mild, easy way, telling them his story of Paul Jones; and, by and by, Willie shouted out loud, "Skipjack!" A call up the wood answered him.

"Skipjack" was Charlie Dodd. He came, an ungainly youth with a long neck, a back shaped like a lad's kite by reason of his sloping shoulders, and enormous hands and wrists.

"Nay, don't hang yourself," the bailiff observed as Charlie passed a loop of rope about his neck; and Jerry and Willie hoisted him up to a bough.

Dead bark and twigs and tree-scurf came down as the Skipjack swung from branch to branch; and he made fast the loop to a high fork, gave a grimace and shout, and came down it in three perilous-looking swings, his especial feat. Jerry smeared the great cross-cut with grease, and they set it into the notch. The sun shone warmly through the bare branches, and the ruddy oak-apples made a rich colour against the sky. Sawdust lodged in the folds of the clothing of the two men as they bent their backs to the cross-cut, and the birds cried more and more loudly. They were chopping in several places at once now, and from the top of another tree the skipjack gave another shout. Now and then Willie and Jerry loosened the saw and rested, their faces crimson; and the bailiff mused among the oaks and told over again the story of Paul Jones. Then Willie and Jerry set the saw aside; the tree was ready for the fall; and men ran from here and there and gathered round the oak, and took the rope and set the huge tree gently rocking on its base. The tree-scurf descended on them, and the birds made a piteous clamour. Willie ran in with a wedge; the tree tottered, hung for a moment beyond its point of balance, and then gave a long groan and twisted slowly. Men sprang for safety as it came over. There was a rushing and breaking of branches, the fibres burst with a loud crack, the boughs whipped out dangerously, and the tree left a great white

blade like that of a sword standing a yard up from the butt. They stood back for a minute, as men stand back from the dying body of a formidable beast; then they ran in and set to work with saws and axes in half-a-dozen places at once. While some sawed and lopped its branches, Willie and Jerry marked the trunk into six-foot lengths and took the cross-cut again. Soon the women brought the morning ale; and then the pilling and bolting irons, like spoons with a solid bowl, were got out.

Fat Maggie had brought a straw hassock, and as she sat wide-lapped on it and worked her pilling-iron the points of her elbows were redder than her red arms. Nan and Jennie Holmes, Jerry's wife and daughter, sat in a litter of brushwood, and Jennie's face worked like her father's as she cut the slashes with a knife and thrust in the iron. The sun caught Jessie Wheeler's hair as she sat in the brown bracken with her skirts tucked close about her ankles; and now and then she glanced across to where Willie thrust at the noisy cross-cut. The air became fragrant with the smell of sawdust and the sharp odour of the new green timber, and the sap glistened in bright films and webs as the bark parted from the white wood. The piles of the smaller bark accumulated about the women, and the white-stripped twigs and billets turned a pale buff in an hour. The creak and rush of another falling tree came from up the wood. Fat Maggie clapped her black hands to her ears as a man began to set a saw immediately behind her; and Willie's oak lay in three great sections, the middle one of which had rolled to one side.

The easy-going bailiff came up again as Jerry stooped to examine the face of the butt section. "What is it?" he said; and Jerry pointed at something. Willie took a bar and rolled the middle section away; and all three of them stooped again to the cut.

"If that's a ring-shake—" Jerry began; but the bailiff rubbed his hands and beamed.

"It isn't a ring-shake; I'll lay I know what it is. Look you! saw this slice clean out, here."

Other men gathered round and watched them saw a three-inch slice out of the tree. The saw polished the heart of the oak like marble, and a foot or so within the bark, and three or four inches in length, a curious mark showed. The bailiff took an axe and chopped into the flat disc; then he took up the disc and one of the fragments.

"Well!" he said, his mild face radiant, "I wouldn't ha' missed that for a crown! I've heard tell of 'em, too! D'ye see?"

Buried in the heart of the tree, and fitting together like a die and matrix, were two letters, an M and a V. They had been cut long ago in the wood itself, and had become overgrown with the newer wood, but had never healed. Men called to one another, and all pressed for a sight of the marvel. Jessie's head rested for a moment against Willie's shoulder, and his hand sought hers as the pieces were passed from hand to hand; and soon the bailiff said, "I'll take these home," and put them into his pocket.

The women fetched the dinner at midday, and after it, Willie and Jessie sat apart in a little copse of hazels. A lean-to of thick base-bark screened them from the others, and the green tassels of the hazels dangled over them. His fingers strayed in her rich hair; as she smiled up at him the corners of her mouth were dewy as the sap that glistened under the rind of the great oaks; and Nellie, the retriever bitch, blinked drowsily at them both.

"It's no deeper nor I ha' for thee," she whispered by and by, as if he knew without telling what she spoke of.

"What, dear?"

"Th' tree," she murmured; and again he caressed her burnished hair.

"Only ten days and we'll be home," he said, presently; "shall ye be glad, Jess?"

"Yes, love; there's no comfort wi' yon sea all about ye, like as if something were al'ays watching ye. I'd sooner meet thee aback o' th' little

lambling-shed at home o' th' hill. An' when we're back I'll mak' thee a dozen shirts wi' my wages, dear—"

Willie laughed. "And what shall we gi'e her, Nellie?" he asked the retriever; and the animal moved her tail lazily, hearing her name. Soon they heard stirrings behind the hazel copse; the women began to pack up tins and dishes; and Jerry's voice called, "Where's my mate?" The men scattered again about the clearings. Again the wood became noisy with the chop of the axe, the knock of the iron, and the hoarse voice of the saw. The huge sections, stripped of their thick rinds, lay white on the bracken. White faggots gleamed against the tan of the inner bark, against the pink-budding thorn and the slate-purple brambles and the quick green of the hazels and elders. The men made another spell of half-an-hour late in the afternoon; and when the sunset gun boomed sullenly from the ship off the Head, they covered the irons and saws and axes with sacking, hid them under a stack of brushwood, and turned their faces towards the sheds for supper. OLIVER ONIONS.

(To be continued.)

## CANAL LIFE IN HOLLAND.

A SYMPATHETIC writer has said, "the canals are the arteries of Holland and the water her life blood." There is one aspect of those waterways that will not strike the casual and uninformed visitor or tourist who takes the canal steamer from Antwerp to Dordrecht or who accomplishes the journey from Rotterdam to The Hague on a "treckschuyt." He will not realise from those experiences



H. Bairstow.

THE VOLENDAM ATTITUDE.

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W. A. J. Hensler.

## IN SERRIED RANK.

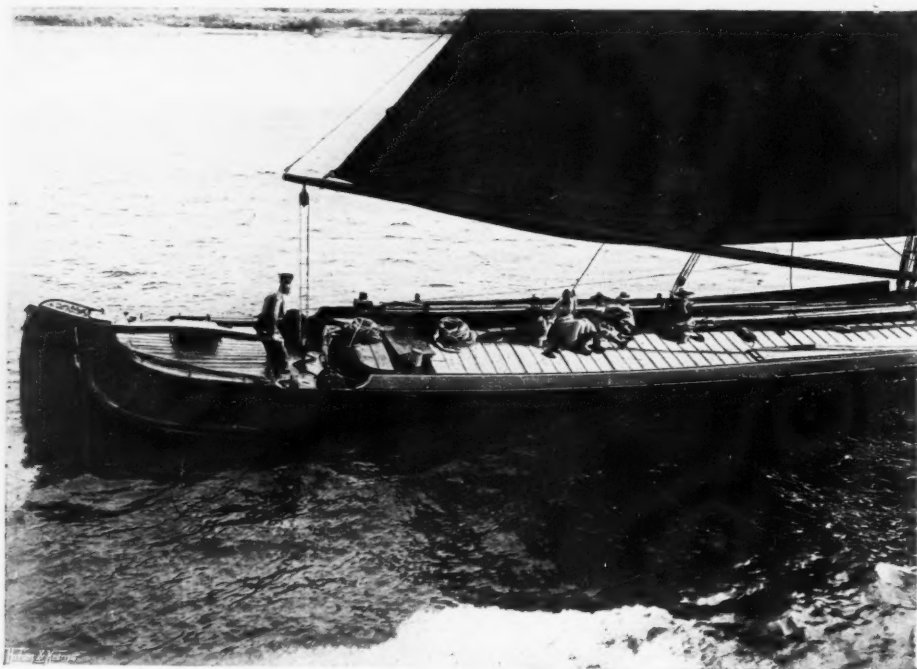
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that there is a large population whose floating homes are plying continuously over the canals and rivers of Holland. Yet a moderate estimate places at 50,000 the number of people who have no other home or domicile than a "tjalk," or barge. As there have been canals in the Netherlands both north and south—that is to say, Belgium as well as Holland—for centuries, it follows that this population is in many ways quite distinct from the rest of the community; and, indeed, the barge-owners form an hereditary craft or profession. Time, which has altered so much on shore, has passed lightly over this amphibious class,

and left the tjalk very much what it was in the time of William of Orange, and perhaps even in that of William the Silent. Neither steam nor electricity has yet supplanted the sail or the towing-rope. There are rumours that those instruments of modern progress are coming to disturb the calm serenity of Dutch canals and canal life, but, fortunately, they have not yet arrived.

The tjalks are used for the conveyance of merchandise, minerals, and freight generally on the canals, and up the great rivers Rhine and Meuse into the interior of Germany, Belgium, and France. These barges are broad and stout, with one mast and large sails, which give them rather the appearance of a lugger. The hull is always painted in bright colours, among which green generally preponderates. The deck and masts are varnished, the poop is usually gilded, and all the brasswork is as resplendent as gold. In the stern under the poop is a little house, in which the barge-owner and his family reside. It has glass windows, two on each side and one at the stern, carefully and neatly draped with white curtains fastened with coloured rosettes and ribbons. This little cabin, which has been not inappropriately compared to a doll's house, is the home of the family owning the tjalk. The family are reared on board, and from childhood to old age this curious race, firmly attached to the life of their ancestors, pass through a tranquil existence in constant movement over the placid waters of those natural or artificial highways, and undisturbed by the social or political problems that agitate the less fortunate residents on land.

It has been said that the barge class is an hereditary profession, and it comes about in this way. The youths who have lived all their lives on board



A DUTCH BARGE.

work and save so that they may buy a barge of their own. Very often the young man will become engaged to the daughter of another barge-owner, and between them a sufficient sum will be raised to purchase a small tjalk. A small or, what is more usual, an old boat can be bought for £30, and having secured this the young couple at once marry, establish themselves on board, and begin to earn their livelihood in the old way as carriers. As they get on they hope to buy a better and a larger boat, disposing of their first purchase to some new beginner. In this manner the barge population is perpetuated, the young taking the place of the middle-aged and old, and the number of tjalks has increased in proportion to the growth of the carrying trade.

As the tjalk is the home, it is typical of the Dutch that a great effort should be made to let it appear as home-like as possible. The upper deck of the poop is converted by means of pots of flowers and plants into the semblance of a garden, and a small gate separates it from the middle and fore part of the boat, in which the cargo is placed. At least one birdcage, with a singing bird behind its brass bars, lends brightness to the scene, and there is always a cat, and generally a dog, too, although the latter



FISHING-BOAT AT SCHEVENINGEN.

is not so popular with the barge population since an edict of the Dutch Government, some years ago, prohibited the employment of dogs in towing. The happy owner of one of these boats has been credited with saying, as he contemplated his pets and his sham garden: "I possess an aviary and a garden like my cousin Hans on the polders, although my home is on



W. A. J. Hensler.

"MAKING AND MENDING."

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the moving waters." The little schipperke, now become so valuable, was always the faithful guardian of the Dutch barge before he became an object of acquisition by plutocrats. He is still to be found on board the larger tjalks, where the presence of a watchdog is needed, more especially when in harbour at some of the foreign river ports.

Mention has been made of the single mast, with its big, heavy sails, but the boat only employs them on the large rivers, and more especially on the Rhine, where towing is impossible. But on the canals of Holland and Belgium the boats are towed. This is done by the bargee himself and his family. It is not at all unusual to see the man, his wife, and a child straining at the rope, but that is only when they are young. When the bargee has reached middle life he thinks he has laboured sufficiently, and it is no uncommon sight to see him taking his ease on the poop, holding the tiller indeed, but still smoking his pipe, while his wife and all his family are straining at the rope on the towing-path. The pleasantest and the prettiest sight is in the evening, when the work of the day is done, and the whole family gathers on the poop, the women engaged in their knitting or sewing, and the men smoking enormous pipes, which are peculiar to their class, while the children play around. Then the tjalk is either moored to the bank, or left to glide slowly with the almost imperceptible current towards its destination. The deck of the poop is the only sitting-room, for the room below is always the bedroom, and as the family grows up it is partitioned off by curtains or a screen, and there are cunningly-arranged cubicles, like ship's bunks, under the windows, which are in no case blocked up. Near the entrance is the cooking-stove, the closed "poêle," which is the simple and efficient cooking-range of North-West Europe, excepting England. If the bargee is prosperous, the little room is rather overfilled with heavy furniture, and movement becomes difficult. Still more remarkable than the cleanness of the boat and the brightness of its contents and ornamentation, is the air of content and freedom from anxiety that is displayed in the happy countenances of the whole of the canal population. But rumours of coming change are in the air. The conditions under which this population, who pass their whole existence on the canals, lives are the survival of an earlier phase of society, of a phase when book-learning was not deemed necessary to happiness, and when a man was not classed as illiterate because he could not sign his own name. The cry in Holland, as elsewhere, has been for education, and it has been much insisted upon that the children of the barge-owners, whose very existence depends upon moving to and fro with as few and as brief halts in port as possible, never have the opportunity of attending school for more than a few days at a time. Consequently the canal population, despite the happiness, despite even the prosperity, contains a large proportion of illiterates. Reformers have, therefore, been demanding that the children of the barge-owners shall attend the schools for nine months in the year, just as if they dwelt on land. The plain meaning of such a decree would be that the barge would cease to be a home, and as a house would have to be provided on

shore for the children, the women would inevitably stay with them, and the happy community of the canal dwellers would be broken up. Then steam and electricity would supersede the towing-rope, and the old-fashioned tjalk, with its bright colours, miniature garden, and contented household on the poop, would give way to some steamer of light draught, far more useful, perhaps, but also far less picturesque. It is said that menaced institutions flourish long, but more than once the guild of tjalk owners has displayed a feeling of alarm at threatened innovations. No way of overcoming the educational difficulty has been found, and it is felt that sooner or later the summons of the schoolmaster will have to be obeyed. There is still time before such a decree comes into effect for the visitor to see, and study if he wishes, the quaint survival of a genuine canal population whose home is on the inland waters of a land so closely linked in many ways with our own as is Holland. The "treckschuyt" is at his service whenever he may choose to use Holland's true highways in preference

to the railroad. If he saunters down the quays of Rotterdam he will see the tjalks loading or unloading their cargoes, and as they are on the point of starting he may notice bearers of small packages hastening down to entrust these carriers with a commission for a friend or relative along the route. But it may be doubted whether any occasional visitor has realised that at least fifty thousand human beings, undeniably prosperous and evidently happy, know no other home than the poop and cabin of a tjalk, and that this canal population is unique in Europe. It still goes on in the traditional groove from childhood to manhood, and from manhood to old age, but the breath of a levelling and relentless reform may before long sweep this, almost the last, survival of mediæval Europe ruthlessly away.

## FROM THE FARMS.

CHICKEN-REARING.

CONSTANT enquiries are being sent to us in regard to the best method of starting a poultry-farm, but we are afraid

many of our correspondents pitch their expectations too high. Writing apparently without any previous knowledge, they imagine that by purchasing a large stock of chickens they may begin instantaneously to earn a considerable income. Now we advise them as strongly as we can not to follow this course. Success in poultry-farming depends almost exclusively upon experience; and, while it would be hopeless for anyone to expect to make a considerable profit by attending to them himself before he has learned the alphabet of the craft, it is also extremely difficult to hit upon a thoroughly efficient servant at a moment's notice. No doubt the best plan, if it could be pursued, would be to hire at the beginning an expert poultry-keeper, and study his or her methods very carefully; but that is difficult, because such a person is in demand, and is not willing to take a small temporary engagement. By far the better plan is to acquire a small but good stock, and to increase it gradually. The first question is what breed should be chosen. It is not our wish to advocate the merits of any one in particular. Some do well with



W. A. J. Hensler

WESTWARD HO

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black Orpingtons, others prefer buff. A great number of successful poultry-keepers adhere to the plan, which has been well tested by experience, of obtaining Dorking hens and matching them with Indian game. That is, undoubtedly, the best way to secure good table chickens and a moderate supply of eggs; but if there be a good market for the latter it is best to acquire some of the non-sitting, heavy-laying species, like the Leghorn or the Minorca. The choice between breeding for the table and breeding for eggs is one that must be to a large extent determined by local circumstances. One point only need be insisted upon, and this is the great advantage of procuring chickens of a pure breed. They may cost a little more at the beginning, but are much more trustworthy than mongrels. Besides, if a little care is taken to see that they come of a good strain, it will be found that reliance can be placed on their producing chickens with their own characteristics; whereas, although a mongrel may be a very good layer, or be able to lay on a fair amount of flesh, its offspring are as likely as not to revert to some bad type. The beginner, therefore, may be most sincerely urged to deal only with a pure stock. The present moment is not at all a bad time to commence. Just now it is quite easy to obtain pullets that are laying, and will become broody shortly, so that the coops may be fully occupied. Nor do we think it advisable to use an incubator much at this season, though, of course, it is essential to success at other times of the year. It is important for the novice to consider what land he will acquire. The more the better, provided it can be had cheaply enough. Birds thrive to a much greater extent if frequently shifted from one place to another, and in taking a fair amount of land an advantage is that other stock may be kept on it, so that the land need not be wholly charged to the poultry account. In most cases a little meadow, with standing ground for the chicken-houses, will be quite sufficient. It will be understood that we do not advocate poultry-farming as an exclusive pursuit. No method has yet been discovered of keeping the ground from being soiled, and while that is so the danger from overcrowding is too obvious to need insisting upon. Poultry-keeping to be successful must be combined with other forms of *la petite culture*.

#### BUTTER AND MILK.

It is a curious fact that in the latter half of 1905 more butter was exported from the United States than during the whole year of 1904, while in January, 1906, the enormous quantity of 5,000,000lb. was exported from the States. The greater proportion of this butter is sent to the United Kingdom; indeed, we get about 70 per cent. of it. Yet it was not much as compared with the total butter coming into Great Britain, which shows a yearly fluctuation. In 1903 it amounted to 445,000,000lb., in 1904 to 475,000,000lb., while in 1905 it was 465,000,000lb. Farmers will note with satisfaction that the importation of milk and cream into this country continues to decrease. In the four weeks ending April 28th no returnable quantity of milk or cream was brought into the United Kingdom from abroad, as against 30cwt. received in the corresponding period of last year. The quantity of cream received from abroad was 211cwt. compared with 290cwt. last year. Preserved milk and condensed milk both showed a considerable falling off, so that there is no immediate prospect of any serious interference with



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#### DIZZY HEIGHTS!

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the only monopoly that is left to the British farmer. We are afraid that the home prospect at the present moment is not a very rosy one. The very cold weather in May has greatly retarded the growth of grass in the meadows. Unless we have a change for the better in the weather, it seems very likely that the year will be considerably below the average both for grazing and for the hay crops. It is a somewhat serious matter for the farmers, because on the holdings the winter supplies of food for the live-stock have now been completely exhausted. This is having a perceptible influence on the meat market, as sales have had to be effected, owing to the difficulty of feeding stock. The Board of Agriculture reporter says that a number of unfinished cattle are being thrown on the market owing to keep being almost exhausted and there being no prospect of early grass.

#### A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

IN locking over the second volume of *Crabbe's Poems* (Cambridge University Press; edited by Adolphus William Ward) one cannot but be struck with the contrast offered between rural life in the first twenty-five years of the last century and rural life of to-day. Crabbe's picture is all the more interesting because, before the word realism was invented, he was a thorough-going realist, or, in Lord Byron's famous phrase, "Nature's sternest painter, but her best." We take such a poem as "The Gentleman Farmer," and though, perhaps, here the change is not so great as in some other directions, still comparison between then and now is interesting.



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

#### NOT IN THE BEST OF TEMPER.

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The type of gentleman farmer portrayed in the following lines is still with us:

The second species from the world is sent  
Tired with its strife, or with his wealth content;  
In books and men beyond the former read,  
To farming solely by a passion led,  
Or by a fashion; curious in his land;  
Now planning much, now changing what he plann'd;  
Pleased by each trial, not by failures vex'd,  
And ever certain to succeed the next;  
Quick to resolve, and easy to persuade—  
This is the gentleman, a farmer made.

The enterprise, however, took a different direction to that which it would to-day. Crabbe's gentleman farmer displayed his skill in small-boned lambs, and in the adoption of the drill and the horse, the latest inventions of his time. A man of similar type to-day we should expect to find investing in American elevators, motor-ploughs, and other machinery of the latest type. The house the farmer lived in has probably undergone a considerable amount of change, too. The festooned crimson curtains, the sofas with "bold elastic swell," the mirrors in gilded frames, the glowing carpets, and the coloured prints have given place to less pretentious furniture. In another poem he has supplied us with a curious picture of what was supposed to be the best that money could buy for a lady farmer in the olden time. The passage we quote is taken from a poem called "Procrastination," and tells how a woman lived after she had inherited a fortune from her aunt:

Some curious trifles round the room were laid,  
By hope presented to the wealthy maid:  
Within a costly case of varnish'd wood,  
In level rows, her polish'd volumes stood;  
Shown as a favour to a chosen few,  
To prove what beauty for a book could do;  
A silver urn with curious work was fraught;  
A silver lamp from Grecian pattern wrought;  
Above her head, all gorgeous to behold,  
A time-piece stood on feet of burnished gold;  
A stag's-head crest adorn'd the pictured case,  
Through the pure crystal shone th' enamel'd face;  
And while on brilliants moved the hands of steel,  
It click'd from pray'r to pray'r, from meal to meal.

But the everyday life of the farmer has undergone a complete revolution. In a few parts of the country it is still customary to feed the farm hands in the kitchen, but we fancy they would be much astonished if subjected to such treatment as Crabbe describes in "The Widow's Tale." Those who know the manner in which agricultural people live to-day will most readily perceive the alteration which has occurred since the time of George Crabbe. Foreign food has found its way even into the farmhouse, and a marked refinement in manners has occurred, as will be evident by a perusal of the following lines:

Used to spare meals, disposed in manner pure,  
Her father's kitchen she could ill endure;  
Where by the steaming beef he hungry sat,  
And laid at once a pound upon his plate;  
Hot from the field, her eager brother seized  
An equal part, and hunger's rage appeased;  
The air, surcharged with moisture, flagg'd around,  
And the offended damsel sigh'd and frown'd;  
The swelling fat in lumps conglomerate laid,  
And fancy's sickness seized the loathing maid.  
But, when the men beside their station took,  
The maidens with them, and with these the cook;  
When one huge wooden bowl before them stood,  
Fill'd with huge bills of farinaceous food;  
With bacon, mass saline, where never lean  
Beneath the brown and bristly rind was seen;  
When from a single horn the party drew  
Their copious draughts of heavy ale and new;  
When the coarse cloth she saw with many a stain,  
Soiled by rude hands who cut and came again.

We could not imagine a passage that could more vividly illustrate the rough plenty of the farmhouse of a century ago. The farmer and his son, it will be noticed, each managed to put away about a pound of beef, and the men and maidens fed in a manner which would be considered barbarous to-day, eating, as it would appear, out of one great wooden dish, farinaceous food that apparently was eaten with the fattest of fat bacon. To wash it down, the horn of strong home-brewed was passed round, from which they all drank. Glasses and cups and saucers were unheard-of luxuries in those times. And the change was not solely in these matters. We gather from the poem that the farmer of those days was in very truth a labouring man, and the girl was probably right in considering that to be a farmer's wife was to be an out-and-out drudge. The gentleman farmer of those days was a rare exception to the general rule. It may be said without fear of contradiction that the typical Farmer Giles did not differ in essentials from the forefathers with whom eighteenth century novels have made us familiar. He was not ashamed of wearing a smock, in which he went about feeding his pigs and cattle or

guiding the plough. To church and market he trotted on the back of a stout nag, or, more likely, cart-horse, while his wife rode pillion behind, and the mounting-stones still to be seen near the village churches were in common use. It has often been pointed out that many mills are so situated that they could only be approached by a bridle-path, and to them the farmer carried his corn on a pack-horse. How different is all this to what occurs to-day, when it is not unusual for a tenant farmer to go on foot to the nearest station, take a return ticket to his destination, and come back without as much as looking in at the tavern where the "farmer's ordinary" is held. Probably the change in the daily existence of the farm labourer is even greater than that which has occurred in the life of his master. We get at least one charming sketch of a labourer's cottage in the olden time:

In childhood feeble, he, for country air,  
Had long resided with a rustic pair;  
All round whose room were doleful ballads, songs,  
Of lovers' sufferings and of ladies' wrongs;  
Of peevish ghosts who came at dark midnight,  
For breach of promise guilty men to fright;  
Love, marriage, murder, were the themes, with these,  
All that on idle, ardent spirits seize;  
Robbers at land and pirates on the main,  
Enchanters foil'd, spells broken, giants slain;  
Legends of love, with tales of halls and bowers,  
Choice of rare songs, and garlands of choice flowers,  
And all the hungry mind without a choice devours.

We know from Izaak Walton that the custom of pinning ballads on the wall was not an unusual one in old times, and it may easily be imagined that in the cottage as well as in the inn the long nights were frequently passed either in singing these ancient ditties, or in reciting from memory some of the stories, such as "The Long Pack," which were disseminated by means of broadsheets. Yet this pleasant feature must not blind us to the dreariness of country life in these old times. The poor people lived, according to Crabbe, in scattered hovels close to which turf was piled in square brown stacks. In the village a blacksmith's shed stood opposite the wheelwright's shop, and had for next-door neighbour an inn for the refreshment of humble travellers. The rustics of those days usually had large families, and we learn from other sources that they were huddled together, old men and children, grown-up men and grown-up women, in one noisome room. As if the filth inside were not sufficient, each hovel had its kitchen midden at the door, and it is no wonder, therefore, that the rural districts were, from time to time, swept by epidemic disease, while hunger, approaching famine, was an experience which none who was dependent on labour could hope to escape.

## COUNTRY LIFE AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

THE general verdict upon the Royal Academy this year is that it is undistinguished. Needless to say, it contains a considerable number of pictures up to a high level of painting, and perhaps it ought in justice to be added that there are fewer absolutely bad and worthless pictures than we have seen in any previous exhibition. But, on the other hand, there is scarcely anything that betrays the slightest glimpse of genius. Even those painters who on previous occasions have established their reputation do not rise above the commonplace. Mr. Sargent, for instance, whose most important picture is a portrait of Lord Roberts, has failed to bring the insight to which he has accustomed us to bear on this splendid subject. When we come to look at our own particular branch of art, country life, we do not find much that is arresting. There are the usual pools, meadows, woods, seas, and animals, but it was not our good fortune to meet with a single picture of this kind that was at all likely to live in the memory. Yet there was much that attained a moderately high level. Some open-air painters, such as Mr. Leader and Mr. Peter Graham, never seem to rise or to fall below their standard. No doubt it is a high standard, but familiarity has made us less appreciative of it than we used to be. As an example we might take the "Morning" of the latter. The rocks, the seagulls, and the beautiful light are extremely well painted, but then there is nothing in the picture which the same painter has not done over and over again. The scenes are generally chosen with an artistic eye, and yet are not exceptionally picturesque. Take, for example, the "Carting Bracken" of Mr. La Thangue. It is much mannered, as is the case with most of this artist's work, but the golden light falling on the boy and the cartful of bracken is one of the tints he so often delights in. Were there no other example of this artist's work in existence, this one would be highly praised, but it seems to us that in it he is not stepping onward. Very similar criticism might be applied to Mr. David Murray's "Farewell to the Forest." Here we have a wood-felling scene

presented with skill and judgment. The trees that remain, the trunks on the ground, and the figures all have the verisimilitude of one of our own photographs, yet it can scarcely be fairly said that the total effect is original. We seem to have gazed on a similar scene many times before. Just in the same way the "Day After the Storm," by Briton Riviere, suggests the question as to how many pictures have not been labelled with this title. Yet the artist is no mere observer, and has an excellent eye for colour. "A May Morning," by Mr. MacWhirter, is in the painter's best style. It shows tall and graceful larch trees, with a path leading through them, to which a girl is crossing by a bridge, while appropriate sheep and lambs are in the foreground. The verdict upon it is bound to be "Pretty, but conventional." The "Winter" of the same artist is open to a similar criticism. One might be forgiven for imagining that he had painted the same trees, although from a different point of view. Once more we have the white-stemmed birch, but this time its graceful branches are bare instead of bursting into leaf, as they were in the "May" picture. Mr. Alfred East shows a country picture in "A Midland Valley," where we have a quiet brook flowing down amidst fat meadows, with umbrageous trees shading the pools, and affording a welcome shade to a flock of sheep. It suggests some of the work of Constable, and that it does not suggest a very striking contrast is a great tribute to Mr. Alfred East. In "The Deserted Mill" Mr. G. D. Leslie has gone to his favourite Thames, where we find the deep, quiet water whose reflections are almost as definite as the form of the objects reflected. He has achieved here an undoubted charm of solitude and silence, which makes the picture one of the

best we have had from his hands. In "Birnam Wood" Mr. David Farquharson has had a subject suitable to his hand. He has endowed the pines with a kind of necromancy that goes far to suggest their connection with witchcraft in Macbeth. "Midsummer," by Mr. Arnesby Brown, R.A., gives us again a typical English meadow with an avenue of trees in which cattle are grazing. Mr. Gow's "Elijah" is entitled to be classified as an open-air study, but the horses do not seem to us particularly good, and the figure of the flying prophet appears to be somewhat lacking in dignity. Mr. George Clausen's "The Green Fields" is after a very obvious model. The eye is irresistibly attracted more to the figure in the foreground than to the meadows over which he is gazing. One of the best studies of horses in the exhibition is that by Mr. George Wetherbee, "The Wings of the Morning." Three spirited horses under the command of a stalwart son of the soil are bathing their feet in the spray of a summer sea; a granite rock rises at some distance, while the light clouds of the dawn are flying past. It is a fine admixture of realism and classical myth. Mr. Claude Hayes gives a very sweet picture of rural life in "The Sheepfold under the Hill," where the simplicity and beauty of Arcady are very finely realised. He makes the point which Mr. Farquharson himself misses in "The Last and Sweetest Hour of Eve," where we see a river, flowing down between trees, while a deer approaches to the water to drink. "The Joy of Life" is a study of horses by Miss Kemp Welch, and one of the best she has accomplished, showing a group of the strong and healthy animals disporting themselves on a May morning.

## SHOOTING.

### THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF WILDFOWL.

OUT of a large experience in all that pertains to the shooting of wildfowl, and the best methods of encouraging them to take up their abode in any desired locality, Mr. R. Hargreaves has been good enough to write us the following notes, which can

not fail to be appreciated by those who wish to bring on a larger head of wildfowl. It will be seen that he does not discuss the artificial rearing, such as that which has been done on such a large scale at Netherby. The point here is to encourage the fowl that are absolutely wild by means that are within the reach of almost every owner of coverts, especially when near the sea. One of the special questions that we put to Mr. Hargreaves, not on artificial rearing, but merely concerning the protection of sitting wild ducks from foxes, he confesses himself at a loss to answer. He writes: "I do not think you can do very much in the way of protecting the fowl while breeding, as they go off to all sorts of places, and bring the young ones back when they are hatched." This is no doubt true, but probably the devices, such as the wire-netting surroundings, and the "Reynardine," and so on, which are found fairly efficacious in protecting sitting partridges, would protect the duck, too. "There seems," he writes on the main subject, "to be a good deal of luck in making ponds for duck and teal, as although the conditions may be apparently the same, one may attract far more fowl than another close by, or one may hold hardly anything but teal, and another hardly anything but duck. A friend of mine who has lately made a pond which is a great success for teal tells me that he believes much of its success to be due to the fact that it is at the intersecting point of two regular lines of flight, as he has, both in the morning and evening, noticed fowl flying over in two distinct directions. As to size, it is not at all necessary that the pond should be large—half an acre is quite large enough, at all events, for teal—and any piece of water that is so wide that it

cannot be covered by two guns on opposite sides is practically useless for making a bag of ducks. A few may be got, but only a very small proportion of the number you see, and it is far wiser to have such a place as a sanctuary and never to shoot it. It will thus act as a feeder to the smaller ponds, an important matter, especially in a case where the ponds are not near the sea, and,

therefore, do not fill up again quickly after they have been shot. A pond can scarcely be too shallow; and steep banks are to be avoided, as the fowl like to be able to get on and off the water easily and sit close to the edge. One essential is that it should be in a place that is hardly ever disturbed. The place I should select would be an oak covert, where for a few pounds a dam can be put across a small stream, or at the lower end of some slight depression, and enough water collected for the pond not to run dry in the summer. It is advisable to plant the dam with willow or some shrub, and, indeed, all round the pond if there is no natural cover, both to enable you to approach it where you shoot, and in the case of the dam to strengthen and hold it together. If there are trees or underwood they should be left standing in the water, as teal, especially, much prefer a pond with plenty of cover, and you have the additional advantage that the trees will keep the pond from freezing much longer and enable you to go on with your sport after other ponds are frozen, and at the very time when there are most fowl in the country. I think something might be done in the way of introducing fresh-water insects and shell-fish, as is often done in a trout-fishery,

into the ponds. The fattest wild ducks I ever ate lived on a stream that had an extraordinary quantity of small shell-fish in it, and I always attributed their condition to that fact. If the dam is not sufficiently high to screen your approach, you will have to make bushed approaches to the 'gazes,' as is done on the Avon, at the easiest point. Put the gazes at one end of the pond, and have the ducks moved from the other when you want to shoot them, unless the pond is small and you have sufficient



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A BROOD OF WILD DUCK.

"C.L."

guns to surround. In one case I know, where a pond has been made in the open by damming all round it, and the water is at much lower level than the top of the dam and some way from it, the entrances to the gazes have been cut through the top of the dam to the height of one's head. If possible, post your guns at the south side of the pond, or you may find the sun very troublesome."

#### REMARKS ON THE WILDFOWL PONDS.

IT is not really necessary for the stocking of such ponds as these to be restricted to the mallard and teal, with an occasional widgeon. The golden-eye is a jolly little fellow, a fine flyer, and a delicately edible duck, and if

bred about the pond has a homing tendency that will lead him back to it again after being disturbed. He there acts as a decoy for other kinds. We can strongly confirm from our own experience what Mr. Hargreaves has to say about the fine condition of the duck that live in streams well supplied with fresh-water shrimps and molluscs. It is thus that we have found them in the rivers that come from the chalk in Norfolk, and not only do the duck grow to a fine size and weight, but the richness of the water in this food which they like of course makes it the more attractive to them. Therefore, it seems that there must be much value in the suggestion to stock these ponds with live food of this kind.

At the same time, it has to be remembered that these things, too, no less than the duck, size for size, have to eat in order to live, and therefore it is as well to see that their food supply is not altogether wanting before they are put in. This is a matter in which the advice of a pisciculturist will be useful and almost essential. He will tell you what plants to put in, and then what insects and crustaceans, and will also supply you with them from his own nursery. For the rest, the oak covert, in which Mr. Hargreaves recommends that the ponds should be made, if possible, supplies the fowl with a rich feast in the acorn-time, and they will wander far from water to pick up the acorns. It may be very well worth while, if you have the luck to have several streams in such a covert, to try their temperature with a thermometer. Some of these streams come up at a considerably warmer temperature than the others, and the warmer is quite certain to be the more generally attractive to the fowl in winter; and it is this latter, therefore, that you should choose, if the choice be given you, for damming up into your pond or ponds.

#### HABITS OF WOODCOCK.

An account which is really very remarkable is sent to us by a correspondent with regard to last season's bag of woodcock in Northumberland. It is remarkable, because it is so much at variance with the accounts from other parts of the country and from all the rest of the United Kingdom and Ireland. It is to the effect that there were many more woodcock in parts, at all events, of the county, and probably in the county generally, last winter than has been the case for many previous winters. The increase, according to his perfectly well-informed statement based on personal knowledge, was a very large one, more than cent. per cent. Of course, as we all know, the common account of woodcock, from whatever quarter of our islands we receive it, is that, though the numbers of the nesting woodcock are increasing, those of the winter immigrant woodcock are steadily on the decrease; and it is for this reason that this exceptional case is such a striking one. The woodcock has been the object of rather unusually close study in Northumberland, the Duke at Aynwick having marked numbers of the young cock, with results that have been rather surprising and have upset received theories, for some, or at least one, of the birds of the year so marked have been found to have travelled North in the winter, and several have been found failing to conform with the rule by which they ought to go southwards from their nesting-places. If this exceptional instance of the increase of woodcock wintering in Northumberland should prove to be the beginning of a new dispensation under which the woodcock will come back generally over the country in something like their former number, it will be as satisfactory as it is interesting. It is to be feared, however, that such a prospect is too good to hope for. The woodcock is a bird so very capricious in its movements, it is so often "here to-day and gone to-morrow," that we have, perhaps, to look on this exceptional case of its increase in one county as something to be accounted for by some peculiar local or climatic influence, likely to be merely temporary, rather than as any sufficient sign that we are entering upon a new order. Now, in this present spring, we are informed that in Dumfriesshire there is a conspicuous absence of nesting woodcock. If this should also prove to be the beginning of an analogous back-swing of the pendulum in the direction of fewer nesting woodcock

generally, and a further reversion of the bird to its old habits, it would be yet more remarkable; but we still seem to find it increasing this year in the South as a nesting bird, so that the Dumfriesshire case is probably as peculiar and local of its kind as the Northumberland one. We may add that it is reported by a very capable field naturalist and a keen first-hand observer.

#### NESTING SNIPE IN THE SOUTH.

The increase of nesting snipe is quite as noticeable as the increase of nesting woodcock; or, rather, the really noticeable feature of the increase is that the snipe is now found nesting in many places where it was not to be found before. Of course, this does not hold good of any country where large areas are being reclaimed from waste and put into cultivation, but wherever the wild is left in its natural state the snipe seems to make itself at home.

Unless the bird is actually flushed (and it is a very close sitter and does not quit the nest—such as it is—is not easily to be found, and the fact that the young birds leave it almost as soon as they are hatched makes it the less likely to be located. There is so little construction about the nest itself that, unless the broken shells remain close to it, it could scarcely be identified or distinguished from its surroundings, so that the eggs and the sitting bird are the only objects that are at all likely to betray it.

#### LATE SNOW AND SITTING GROUSE.

A grouse moor owner in the milder western part of the Lowlands of Scotland writes to us expressing fears of great damage done to the sitting grouse by the late snows. At the same time, writing on April 26th, he says that he is daily expecting to see some of the newly-hatched wild duck. There is every reason to fear that very general injury may have been done to the embryo grouse stock, both on the Scottish Lowlands and on the moors of England and Wales. In fact, everywhere except the Highlands, where the grouse are later in their seasons, the snow has come just at the time to be rather disastrous. Taking a general survey of the situation and prospects, he says that rabbits are as prolific as usual, in spite of the hard weather; and that such hares as there are in that country are doing well, and that leverets are more forward than usual in their growth. Writing three days later from one of the best Welsh moors, a correspondent states that the snowstorm on the night of the 28th ult. was as heavy as any that they had during the winter. He speaks, however, of only 3deg. of frost, which is a great deal less than in some of our most Southern English counties. Still, the snow is quite sufficient to try the sitting grouse very hardly, and he adds: "Most of the grouse are sitting now, but the bulk were not so early as I at one time thought they would be. The first eggs were seen on April 3rd, and the most in a nest up to the present time is nine. The heather and other plants on the moor are backward in growth this year. I was speaking to an old shepherd last week, and he was saying that he did not think he had ever seen their growth so backward." He adds that the earliest date on which he has ever seen young grouse on that moor is May 6th, and that they were then, as he judged, a day or two old.

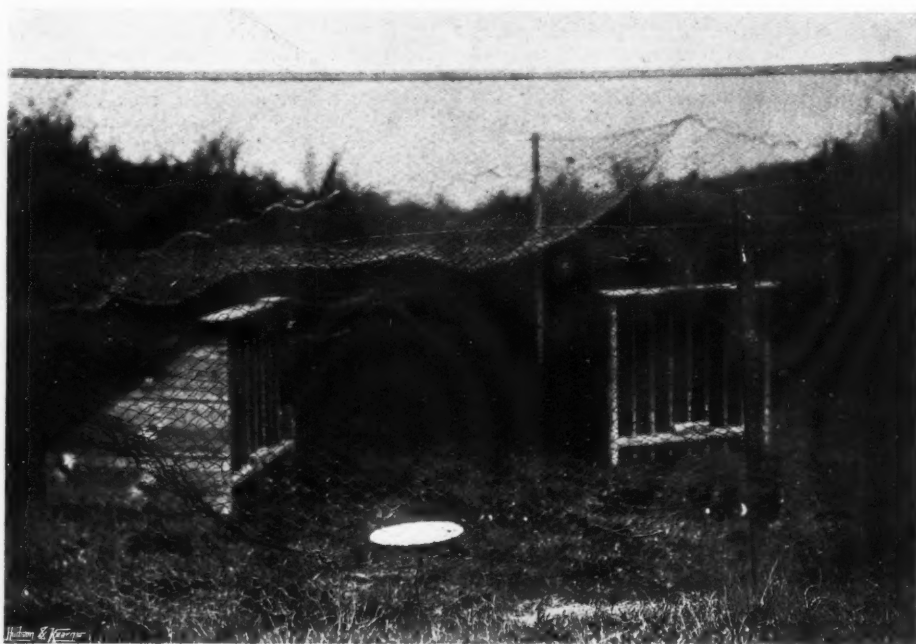
Every day, therefore, is, at the moment of writing, a crucial one for the welfare of the Southern grouse, at all events, and every day of continued cold is an added danger.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. BENSON AND PAN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Assuming that the shepherd-god is not as dead as Mrs. Browning and other writers would have had us believe, I should recommend him to enter the above-suggested action without delay. Worshipped and propitiated as he was by the ancient order of shepherds, we know he was also dreaded by them, but that chiefly on account of a grimly humorous habit he had of peering suddenly through bush or brake and terrorising both shepherd and flock. This, however, was mere horse—or rather goat—play, and apparently brought no lasting ill-will to the shaggy wood-deity. Therefore I submit that to represent him as a malodorous, murderous fiend (and a black one at that), as Mr. Benson has done, is simply a libel on honest Pan, and dismally far for students of the quaint legends of Arcady. How infinitely more joyous and satisfying was the conception of the author of a poem which appeared—with a pleasing and appropriate illustration—in one of our foremost magazines not very long ago. In this, the poet feigns that, wandering through the woods, he mourned that Pan should be said to be no more, when lo! chancing to peep through a small opening that revealed a green-turfed glade, bathed in warm sunshine, he beheld the aged Pan, mild and snow-bearded, seated half-reclining against a mossy tree root, and dandling on his



SAFEGUARDED FROM RATS AND FOXES.

knee "a youngling fox," which he tenderly caressed, the while its contented mother lay stretched out in the sunshine, blinking complacently at her cub and its protector. Myself, I prefer this treatment of the subject to that which the author of "Dodo" gives us. A possible light on the motif of "The Angel of Pain" seems to be that its author, tired of the babblings of jargon-mongers about "the return to Nature," "the simple life," "Nature-worship," etc., has thought fit to "spring upon us" his death-disseminating and noisome wood-fend by way of demonstrating that the Spirit of Nature is anything but kindly. Granted that it is not, in the ordinary sense of the word, surely it is always just, and not malicious. But malice appears the keynote of Mr. Benson's goat-devil creation. Mrs. Browning, it may be remembered, in a poem which, I suppose, some would deem less exalted than her "Dead Pan," but which is, withal, decidedly more cheerful, has given us a picture of the god as a life-renewer:

"This is the way," laughed the great god Pan  
(Laughed while he sat by the river),  
'The only way since gods began  
To make sweet music, they could succeed.'  
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,  
He blew in power by the river.  
  
Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!  
Piercing sweet by the river,  
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!  
The sun on the hill forgot to die  
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly  
Came back to play on the river."

Incidentally, what a curious attribute of the modern author is the habit of availing himself of the "short story" exercise-ground to take a sort of preliminary canter, as it were, before proceeding to the greater work. Incident for incident almost (with the exception of the "love element"), "The Angel of Pain" appeared many months ago in one of the leading magazines. Whether under its present title, however, I do not recollect.—TOKKASAN.

#### THE HOBBY-HORSE DANCE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Padstow is not the only place where the May Day hobby-horse dance is carried on. It exists further along the same coast at Minehead, and probably at other places in the West. Every May Day the hobby-horses (of which the sailors in the harbour have generally the best) parade from Minehead to Dunster and back, with rough music and crowds of followers. I am told that at one time the customs led to very riotous conduct, and that there was something like a fight between the Minehead and Dunster people.—X.

#### BLACK GLAZED BRICKS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can you give me any particulars as to when and where those black glazed bricks that were so much used in the building of the late Georgian houses in Brighton and the district were made? Do any of the local brick-makers make these bricks now, or have they entirely gone out of use? I noticed a large house near Patcham built of these bricks, and they gave a very quiet, dignified appearance to the building.—H. E.

#### SYNONYMS OF ENGLISH PLANTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read with much interest the article in your issue of April 21st, on "Synonyms of English Plants." I was rather surprised to see the name Ragged Robin applied to *Geranium robertianum*, as I have invariably heard *Lychnis Flos-cuculi* called Ragged Robin, and the name seems peculiarly appropriate to this flower with its torn and ragged petals; it is also called the Cuckoo-flower in English as well as in Latin. I think, too, that the Stork's-bill, though nearly related, is a different flower; and the geranium should be called Crane's-bill. The Rev. C. A. Johns explains that geranium and erodium are respectively derived from two Greek words meaning crane and heron. Is Bachelor's Buttons a local name for this geranium? I have always heard it used to describe double ranunculus. The coming of the cuckoo is responsible for many plant synonyms, and Cuckoo-flower is the most common name for *Cardamine pratensis*, evidently the flower alluded to by Tennyson in "The May Queen," though Shakespeare uses the more appropriate and quaint name of Ladies' Smocks. What Cuckoo-pint means I have never been able to discover, but it is one of the names for the *Arum maculatum*. Another plant, the Eyebright (*Euphrasia officinalis*) seems to have been overlooked by your correspondent, who gives the name to the *Veronica Chamædrys*; but I am inclined to think Wordsworth also meant the latter when he wrote "The troubling Eyebright showed her sapphire blue." Both flowers grow in the Duddon Valley; but his description is most characteristic of the speedwell. Can any of your correspondents tell me if they know *Linaria vulgaris* as Butter-and-Eggs? I am not sure where I learnt this name. R. L. Stevenson said, "All the names I know from nurse"; but there seems to be a danger that the nurse of the future will only learn scientific botany at school, and the good old English names will be forgotten. I hope we shall be favoured with more information on this interesting subject of synonyms, which may help to avert this danger.—E. M. E.

[The popular names of English wild plants show a certain amount of overlapping in their application. A name given in one locality to a particular plant may be sometimes applied in another locality to an allied or somewhat similar plant. Thus, though it is true that *Lychnis Flos-cuculi* is the plant generally known as Ragged Robin, as our correspondent states, yet in some districts, for instance, in the Midlands, *Geranium robertianum*

has also this appellation. Thus, too, though the name Eyebright is used commonly for *Euphrasia*, yet it is likewise a familiar synonym for the little blue speedwell, *Veronica Chamædrys*. The article referred to dealt with the popular names of some definite specified plants, but it was in no way intended to suggest that any of these names necessarily belonged exclusively to one plant. Bachelor's Buttons, as a name, is claimed by several flowers—the double ranunculus, *Geranium robertianum*, the red campion, and, perhaps, others, but these various references were not given, because it was only in enumerating the common names of *Geranium robertianum* that this name occurred. We have frequently heard country people refer to *Linaria vulgaris* as Butter-and-Eggs, and Mrs. Loudon in writing of this plant eighty years ago says, "the bright yellow of the greater part of the flower with its orange mouth have given rise to the popular English name of Butter-and-Eggs."—ED.]

#### A PLEA FOR AN EAST-END GARDEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I ask leave to appeal to the generosity of your readers on behalf of a small garden in the very heart of London's slums. It is at the back of a ladies' settlement in Bethnal Green, and for the last two or three years, thanks to the generous response of friends to my appeal for money and plants, there has been quite a gay show of spring and summer flowers in the somewhat limited space and in the very smutty air. But we are sadly in want of more money to keep up the garden, and I venture to beg, through the medium of your widely-read paper, for small annual subscriptions. If we could be sure of £20 annually, we should be very well able to keep the garden supplied with plants and all things necessary for its upkeep. I think if your readers could realise what the joy of the sight and scent of flowers is to those who are working hard through the year in the most sordid and unlovely parts of London, they would not hesitate to give a little towards the garden in the slums. May I ask that all subscriptions to the Bethnal Green Garden may be sent to Miss Halpin, St. Margaret's House, Bethnal Green, E. 2?—EVELYN TALBOT.

#### RINGED SNAKES AND NEWTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should be very much obliged if any of your readers who are in the habit of observing animals could tell me (of their own observation) whether the ringed snake will eat newts. It seems very curious that it should not do so, yet in a pond which I watch pretty constantly, which is full of newts, both of the common and the great kind, and which ringed snakes visit often, they never seem to touch the newts. The snakes swim round the pond and poke their noses into every tuft of rushes, and so on, in search, I think, of larvæ and frog spawn (if any of the latter should have risen), but though the little newts scuttle out of the snakes' way very quickly the snakes never try to catch them. The books say that frogs are a very favourite food of the snakes, and that is quite correct; but what the books do not generally refer to is the fondness of the ringed snakes for small trout, which they will pursue fiercely in the streams. The great newt might possibly be rather a large mouthful for all except a full-grown ringed snake, but the common newt would seem just the right size for even a half-grown snake, and I should like to know whether anyone has seen the snakes preying on them.—H. G. II.

#### A BOY'S PHOTOGRAPH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Father says perhaps you would like to put this picture in your paper.



I am only eleven years old, and I would be very pleased if you could put it in. This road is very much used by London cyclists, and the bursting of the leaves makes the trees and the country roads look very beautiful. My uncle gave me the camera, and I made the negative all by myself.—GEORGE NICHOLLS.

#### OWLS IN THE DAYTIME.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—At the back of the house I am staying in now are a wood and a tower belonging to one of those sham ruins which it delighted our grandparents to erect. In this tower and in some of the trees are a large colony of owls.

I often hear them and sometimes see them in the daytime. I am inclined to think that owls hoot a good deal in the daytime, especially in the nesting season, but that among the many noises of the day the sounds do not strike our ears. One colony I know is at times very noisy. By watching carefully I have come to the conclusion that the unusual screams and noises are occasioned by the resolution of the parent owls, who probably wish to raise a second brood, to turn the first brood out of the nest, and by the remonstrances and resistances of the youngsters who have no desire to be turned out to fend for themselves. But, of course, the older birds prevail. Immediately after this happens the owl colony is unusually noisy at night, and they not seldom perch on the roof of the house. I think, so far as I could judge by watching them on clear nights, that after the young owls have been turned out they hang about the nest for some time, and follow the parent birds at night, clamouring for the food which, perhaps, they learn in this way to find for themselves. It is easy to imagine how the young bird following the old one would learn to imitate its tactics and methods. There is one thing that I have once known a wild owl do, and that is to take prey in the daytime; I say a wild owl because I knew of a tame one allowed its liberty that would hunt and catch pigeons among the chimneys of a manufacturing town. This wild owl flew across from its nesting trees into a clump near the house, and secured, in broad daylight, a young starling, just able to fly, that was perching in the tree. The foliage, I may say, was thick, and it was about eleven o'clock on a dull summer day. Have any of your readers known a similar instance? I have a special liking for owls, and a fondness for observing them.—X.



#### WATER- OUSELS' NESTS.

[THE EDITOR.]  
SIR,—I enclose a photograph of a water-ousel's nest in a somewhat unusual situation. It is in an old fish-kettle, hanging from the bough of an alder tree, and is about 4ft. above the water, and free to swing in the wind. How the kettle got there I do not know, but presume it must have come down the river in a flood, and so got hooked on to the bough.—  
ARTHUR R. BEALL, Salop.

[THE EDITOR.]  
SIR,—At Presteign, Radnorshire, there is a corn-mill with

large water-wheel daily at work, and alongside of it a turbine cleverly arranged with noisy machinery day and night to pump water for the town. On a ledge in the wall dividing the water-wheel and turbine, which can only be approached under a four-wheel cu'vert carrying a roadway to the mill, a pair of ousels have built their nest, and are hatching off a brood, undeterred by a very dark approach, and quite regardless of the noisy, splashy machinery.—  
I. F. SYMONDS.

#### A RIDERLESS FENCER.

[TO THE EDITOR.]  
SIR,—I herewith send a photograph of a novel incident which happened at the Eastbourne Hunt Point-to-Point Steeplechases. In the race for heavy-weights, Mr. Roland Gwynne on his horse, The Friar, was riding third two furlongs from home, and would probably have won had he not lost a stirrup and fallen from the saddle; but the horse continued the course, and the enclosed photograph shows him taking one of the fences.—  
CHARLES BREACH.



#### THE DOL-WYLM CROMLECH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photograph shows this imposing cromlech, which stands in a wood on the estate of Mr. Protheroe of Dol-Wylim, Carmarthenshire. It is encircled by beech trees, and has somewhat the appearance of some huge monster of the forest rearing its gigantic form amidst the peaceful sylvan surroundings.—E. L.

#### CRAYFISHING IN YORKSHIRE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have only just read the most interesting article in your issue of April 14th entitled "Crayfishing in Germany." As, however, my own experience differs slightly from a statement made by the writer, I thought perhaps you might care to hear my experience in Yorkshire. The writer of the article states that "it is true that crayfish feed upon carrion, but only when it is quite fresh. They reject the putrid flesh of dead animals." When I was initiated into the mysteries of crayfishing on a Yorkshire river, the very first thing I was told was that I must get a piece of liver as bait, and that "it must be very high and far gone, or they will not come for it so readily." I was distinctly informed that, unless the liver was practically putrid, I might expect but few fish. This I found to be quite correct, though a few did undoubtedly come to some fresh bait I had. They make quite a fête day of the opening of the crayfish season on this river, where I had the pleasure of learning a great deal about this creature. I found on many parts of the banks, especially in shallow, gravelly parts of the river, innumerable broken-up shells of the crayfish. At first I imagined they must be casting their shells, but a careful watch enabled me to learn that the seagulls, which come very far inland, were skilled crayfishers, and they would stand by the edge of the stream, or knee-deep in it, and secure their quarry so soon as it put a claw from underneath its protecting stone. The way the villagers catch crayfish in Yorkshire is to get a long stick, or take off the top joint of a fishing-rod; tie securely to this a length of string—say, perhaps, 2yds.—and to the bottom of that a piece of "unpleasant" liver, carefully wrapped round with string, so that it might not easily get pulled to pieces. Peering over into the moderately-deep water, one could watch the bait sink, gradually getting deeper, until it found a resting-place. In a little while something black and small would emerge from some hiding-place, and then two black, shadow-like claws, followed shortly by the whole crayfish. They are remarkably cautious, but, once they lay hold of the bait, they hang on with great tenacity, and one may slowly raise it almost to the surface of the water with the creature still clinging. At this juncture you are supposed to dexterously jab a landing-net beneath the bait and fish, and, turning him out on to the bank, you are ready for the next one. If the critical moment were not chosen, however, I found the crayfish would, with lightning rapidity, dart backwards through the water, and the slightest movement seemed to give it a

fright. Sometimes as many as three or four are caught on one piece of bait, it generally proving attractive in proportion to the state of putrefaction of the bait. I made a special study of these freshwater crustacea. They seem only to be found in streams of a chalky nature, which helps them in the manufacture of their shell covering. I do not know if British crayfish differ from their German cousins, but from this you will see that in England they certainly will eat putrefied carrion, and do not reject it as your correspondent suggests.—W. P. MAILL, Bede House Sunderland.